

THE MILITANT

INSIDE
Cuban Five write about fight to free them from 'hole'

—PAGE 8

A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

VOL. 67/NO. 17 MAY 26, 2003

Róger Calero wins victory in fight to end deportation

U.S. gov't requests termination of exclusion proceedings

BY MICHAEL ITALIE

On May 1 the campaign to stop the deportation of Róger Calero won a signal victory in the effort to secure his right to live and work in the United States. On that date the immigration police announced its intention to drop their effort to exclude him from this country. Calero and his supporters among unionists, immigrant rights fighters, defenders of civil liberties, and others have been waging this fight since Dec. 3, 2002, when he was detained by Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) cops at Houston Intercontinental Airport.

"This is an important victory in the fight for workers' rights," said Calero in an interview with the *Militant*. "It is especially significant coming just two days after the April 29 Supreme Court decision permitting the federal government to hold legal immigrants like myself without bail during their deportation proceedings" (see article on page 6).

The U.S. Department of Homeland Security, under which the INS has been reorganized, informed Calero May 1 that it was requesting the Immigration Court to "terminate the instant Removal Proceedings predicated on the Notice to Appear dated December 3, 2002, issued in Houston, Texas." Without further explanation, Assistant District Counsel Alan Wolf of Homeland Security based his motion to drop the case against Calero on two sections of the Immigration

Continued on Page 7



Militant/Mary Ann Schmidt

Róger Calero speaks with workers picketing Point Blank Body Armor in Oakland Park, Florida, in January (above). These garment workers struck for six months for union recognition by UNITE. The company was forced to rehire all the strikers by February 7 and reinstate fired union militants. Calero visited these and other embattled workers to offer his solidarity and win support for his fight, which won wide media coverage. Spanish-language Univisión TV featured Calero's case on the *Aquí y Ahora* show March 13 (left).



U.S. troops kill protesters in Iraq; Washington targets 'Iranian agents'



U.S. soldiers in schoolhouse in Falluja, Iraq, from which they shot and killed 13 people protesting their occupation of the school on April 29.

BY PATRICK O'NEILL

Washington has been taking further steps to institutionalize its occupation of Iraq, moving in troops and equipment designed to impose "law and order" in the capital and organizing a U.S.-run regime. At the same time, U.S. officials are pressing their drive toward war against Iran, using as a pretext their charge that Tehran has sent agents into Iraq. U.S. Army officers have declared that they have begun seizing alleged Iranian agents. They have also stationed U.S. troops on the major

roads to, and crossings between, the two countries.

Pentagon officials have reported they will send up to 4,000 troops into Baghdad in the next few weeks as part of restructuring the U.S. military presence to meet the needs of the imperialist occupation regime, packaged as "peace enforcement." Some 20,000 U.S. troops are already deployed in or around the Iraqi capital.

The new forces will expand the number of military police from 140 to about 1,200 troops, outfitted with body armor

for "policing" work. Hundreds of Humvee military vehicles, better suited for street patrols, will replace the heavier tanks and Bradley fighting vehicles. The occupation authorities are also using police from the former Baathist regime. U.S. occupation authorities issued a radio message calling for all Iraqi cops from the four main police forces to report for duty on May 4. Los Angeles Police Department officers from

Continued on Page 11

Workers contribute to Militant Fund

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

"The *Militant* is an excellent newspaper. It keeps readers up to date with what's really going on not only in this country but around the world. It also keeps readers abreast of important developments that the *Washington Post* and *Washington Times* don't even cover, like the fight to stop the deportation of Róger Calero."

That was a message sent by Johnny Williams, a union meat packer in the Washington, D.C., area, to a May 3 event to raise funds for the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*. His response captured the enthusiasm for these two socialist publica-

Continued on Page 5

Thousands celebrate as U.S. Navy quits Vieques

BY RÓGER CALERO

Thousands of people poured into the streets May 1 to celebrate a victory in Vieques as the U.S. Navy officially ended its presence on that small Puerto Rican island. For more than six decades, Vieques residents and other Puerto Ricans have fought tenaciously against the use of this land for bombing practice and war exercises by Washington, the colonial ruler of Puerto Rico.

They finally won.

At midnight on April 30, when the U.S. military officially relinquished its jurisdiction over the occupied lands, residents celebrated with fireworks, shooting 68 rockets into the air, one for each year of the Navy's presence on the island.

A crowd that had gathered outside the gates of the Camp García base to await the historic moment marched onto the grounds carrying the flags of Puerto Rico and Vieques, chanting "*Vieques sí, Marina no!*" (Vieques yes, Navy no). They drove their vehicles freely past what just a few hours earlier had been a heavily guarded U.S. military post.

Some 40 fishermen and other supporters landed from boats at different points along the former bombing range in eastern

Continued on Page 4

N.Y. unionists rally against layoffs, cuts in services

BY SAM MANUEL

NEW YORK—Thousands of workers rallied outside city hall here April 29 against planned layoffs and cuts in municipal services. The after-work protest, organized by District Council 37 of the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), stretched for several city blocks. Officials and members of other unions in the city also joined the action. Among them were contingents of the Service Employees International Union Local 1199, Transport Workers Union Local 100, Civil Service Employees Associa-

Continued on Page 13

Also Inside:

'It's a map but the road leads to Israel, not Palestinian state' 3

New Pathfinder bookstore opens in Gothenburg, Sweden 4

'Conflict between U.S. imperialism and Cuba is central to world politics' 8

Fascism: what it is and how to fight it 9

Polisario leader tours New Zealand, Australia 10

Nevada gold miners strike for pay, seniority

BY BILL ESTRADA
AND ROLLANDE GIRARD

ELKO, Nevada—Several hundred gold miners walked off the job March 27–28 at Newmont Mining Corp. to press their fight against company concession demands. Members of International Union of Operating Engineers Local Union no. 3 have worked without a contract since Sept. 30, 2002, at Newmont, one of the world’s largest gold producers.

The 960 union miners, out of a workforce of some 1,500, work at the company’s underground and surface mining operations in Carlin Trend, a 250-square-mile area in northern Nevada where one-third of all gold is mined in the United States.

Workers carried out the two-day strike in response to company efforts to gut seniority rights. Newmont bosses are demanding a “skills-based” seniority system, which they claim would provide greater “opportunities” for employees while allowing the company more “flexibility” in moving workers from job to job. Union chief negotiator Frank Herrera told the Las Vegas *Sun* that “Newmont could demote workers if they don’t meet certain company criteria, including being able to handle up to eight different pieces of equipment.”

The miners work rotating 12-hour shifts. Many pay for charter-bus rides to get to the Carlin mining operation, which is about 30 miles away from Elko.

The company wants “to be able to hire people off the street for less money to do the jobs of those with more seniority,” said a miner, “and then put the older people in harder jobs to make them quit and lose their pension.”

Another miner also spoke about the harsh conditions in the underground mine. “The company assigns you to work for two hours in a place more hot than hot,” he said, “and some people have passed out [including me.] They don’t care.”

Whether miners are members of the union or not, most say that they supported the walkout. “The union sets the wage scale,” explained a worker coming back from work. “If the company wins against the union or if they get rid of it, the wages would go down in all the mines.” Miners say that Newmont is the only union-organized gold mine in northern Nevada.

Miners say that Newmont has penalized workers for union activity, and imposed

unilateral changes such as an increase in co-payments for health-care benefits, and cuts in bonuses.

Miners also confront a dangerous level of naturally occurring arsenic, a very dangerous carcinogenic chemical element, in the hot underground mine. The workers are demanding an arsenic-free place to eat their lunch.

After the walkout, the company agreed to restart negotiations.

Bonanza for mine bosses

Elko township is situated in northern Nevada at an elevation of 5,060 feet. With only a 90-day growing season placing severe limits on agriculture, the state’s economy is based mainly on the mining industry and casinos. The state of Nevada is the third-largest producer of gold in the world after South Africa and Australia.

Denver-based Newmont Corp. also has mining operations in Indonesia, Africa, Australia, Bolivia, Ecuador, New Zealand, Turkey, and Uzbekistan. The company hires close to 25,000 workers worldwide, including 2,875 in the United States. Newmont’s underground and pit mines at the Carlin Trend started production in 1965, and by April 2002 this mining operation had produced 36 million ounces of gold.

Higher gold sales and prices nearly quadrupled the company’s net income in the last quarter of 2002. Newmont’s chairman and chief executive officer, Wayne Murphy, told the March 28 Elko *Press* that “a dollar change in the gold price results in a one-

cent impact per share and \$5.3 million in cash flow for the company.”

The average price of gold was nearly \$310 per ounce in 2002, compared to a low of \$271 per ounce in 2001. The price rose to \$380 earlier this year and now stands near \$330 per ounce.

Due to the weak U.S. economy and the decline of the U.S. dollar, some businessmen, middle-class layers, and governments in several countries have started to increase their holdings in gold in place of U.S. currency. Unlike paper money or shares in stocks, precious metals are commodities possessing an intrinsic exchange value, derived from the labor power involved in mining and processing them. Gold is a traditional haven in times of economic and political crisis. This is behind the recent rise in the price of gold—it constitutes a real asset, while the U.S. dollar is just a promise.

State laws aid mine owners

Nevada is a so-called right-to-work state, which means the “closed shop”—a gain of the labor movement which makes union membership mandatory in union-organized work places—is outlawed. The wealthy in Nevada also don’t pay estate, personal property, or inventory taxes.

The General Mining Law of 1872, still in effect, allows corporations to take over land where there is a deposit of minerals and buy it for no more than \$5 an acre—the price set in 1872. Newmont owns or controls around 3,000 square miles of land in Nevada. Under the same 1872 law, no roy-

alties are paid to the federal government by hard-rock mineral mines. In comparison, royalties from coal, oil, and gas on public lands are between 8 and 16 percent.

Nevada tops all 50 states in pollution with 1.3 billion pounds of toxins, mostly from hard-rock mining, released into the air, water, and soil—the equivalent of 750 pounds of pollutants for every person living in the state. The toxic elements include lead, arsenic, cyanide, and mercury. Under the Mining law 557,000 hard-rock mine sites have been left unreclaimed.

Newmont spilled 24,000 gallons of cyanide solution at its Pinion mill facility, in Winnemucca, in May of last year. The Nevada Department of Environmental Protection claimed that this did not affect the aquifers or the Humboldt River, and that therefore there were no public health risks.

Barrick Goldstrike Mines, Inc., a Toronto-based company with a mining operation in Carlin, is one of the largest polluters in the country. It won a victory in April when Judge Thomas Jackson ruled in Washington, D.C., that the Environmental Protection Agency was wrong in requiring mining companies to include “the natural movement of rock” as part of their annual toxic release inventory report. Barrick produces about 400 million pounds of pollutants every year. Nevada currently is 10th in the nation in cancer mortality.

Bill Estrada is a coal miner in Utah and Rollande Girard is a sewing machine operator in San Francisco.

Pennsylvania glass workers strike over pay cut

BY PETE MUSSER

SHALER, Pennsylvania—More than 300 workers approved a new contract April 24 and ended their strike against Glenshaw Glass Co. Members of locals 76 and 134 of the Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastics & Allied Workers International Union had walked out at the bottle maker April 15 in face of a steep wage cut demanded by the company.

Originally the boss proposed an 8 percent cut across the board, said members of Local 134 on the picket line. When workers rejected that concession, company president John Ghaznavi presented a demand

for a 5 percent wage cut. Workers rejected the second proposed wage cut April 14 by a vote of 149 to 110. Local 134 president Lou Brudnock told the Pittsburgh *Post-Gazette* that the walkout began after the owner turned down a union proposal for a one-year wage freeze.

Ghaznavi put out a statement that “We are trying to save an old plant.” Arguing that his company can’t stay competitive without lowering wages, Ghaznavi said he needed the cash from a pay cut because the “furnaces at the Glenshaw plant are in need of repair.” Workers on the picket line, however, pointed out that the boss has refused to do routine maintenance for years.

The new contract includes the 5 percent wage cut originally rejected by union members, while the company promises to add jobs by building a new furnace by the end of the year.

Workers are angry that the company has not paid into the pension fund for more than one year. “Something has to be done” about companies that divert funds from pensions, said Paul Domski, Local 134 vice president and strike coordinator, in an interview. “It’s



Picket at Glenshaw Glass; strike lasted nine days.

not right for the working person.” Easter Sunday motorists honked in support of strikers holding union signs that read, “No Scabs” and “Pension Thieves.” Several strikers described the kind of support they’ve gotten from others in nearby communities, including food donations.

The union’s demands included the rehiring of three truck drivers fired from their jobs at a nonunion trucking company also owned by Ghaznavi. According to Domski, the truckers were fired when they refused to cross the picket line to deliver their loads to the Glenshaw plant. He said the strikers would not return to work until the three drivers are reinstated.

THE MILITANT

The facts on U.S. prison camp at Guantánamo

This photo illustrates the ‘interrogation’ methods U.S. wardens use against 660 men imprisoned, without trial or charges, at Guantánamo, Cuba—territory occupied by Washington against the will of the Cuban people. The ‘Militant’ brings you the facts the gov’t tries to hide. Don’t miss a single issue!



SUBSCRIBE TODAY!

NEW READERS

☐ \$10 for 12 issues

RENEWAL

☐ \$15 for 12 weeks

☐ \$27 for 6 months

☐ \$45 for 1 year

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

UNION/SCHOOL/ORGANIZATION _____ PHONE _____

CLIP AND MAIL TO THE MILITANT,
152 W. 36TH ST., #401, NEW YORK, NY 10018.

12 weeks of the Militant outside the U.S.: Australia and the Pacific, A\$20 • United Kingdom, £8 • Canada, Can\$15 • Caribbean and Latin America, \$15 • Continental Europe, £12 • France, 20 Euros • Iceland, Kr1,800 • New Zealand, NZ\$20 • Sweden, Kr75 (Send payment to addresses listed in business information box)

The Militant

Vol. 67/No. 17

Closing news date: May 6, 2003

Editor: ARGIRIS MALAPANIS
Business Manager: PAUL PEDERSON
Washington Bureau Chief: SAM MANUEL
Editorial Staff: Róger Calero, Michael Italie, Martin Koppel, Sam Manuel, and Paul Pederson.
Published weekly except for one week in January, June, August and December.
The Militant (ISSN 0026-3885), 152 West 36th St., #401, New York, NY 10018. Telephone: (212) 594-1014; Fax (212) 594-1018.
E-mail: TheMilitant@compuserve.com
The Militant **website** is: www.themilitant.com

Correspondence concerning subscriptions or changes of address should be addressed to The Militant Business Office, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Periodicals postage paid at New York, NY.
POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Militant, 410 West St., New York, NY 10014.

Subscriptions: **United States:** for one-year subscription send \$45 to above address.

Latin America, Caribbean: for one-year subscription send \$65, drawn on a U.S. bank, to above address. By first-class (airmail), send \$80.

Asia: Send \$80 drawn on a U.S. bank to above address.

Canada: Send Canadian \$75 for one-year subscription to Militant, 1237 Jean-Talon est, Montréal, QC. Postal Code: H2R 1W1.

United Kingdom: £50 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution, 47 The Cut, London, SE1 8LF, England.

Southern Ireland and Continental Europe: £70 for one year by check or international money order made out to Militant Distribution at above address. **France:** Send 115 euros for one-year subscription to Militant, Centre MBE 175, 23 rue Lecourbe, 75015 Paris; chèque postale: 40 134 34 U.

Iceland: Send 6,500 Icelandic kronur for one-year subscription to Militant, P.O. Box 233, 121 Reykjavik.

Sweden, Finland, Norway, Denmark: 550 Swedish kronor for one year. Pay to Militant Swedish giro no. 451-32-09-9.

New Zealand: Send New Zealand \$90 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand. **Australia:** Send Australian \$90 to P.O. Box K879, Haymarket, NSW 1240, Australia. **Pacific Islands:** Send New Zealand \$90 to P.O. Box 3025, Auckland, New Zealand.

Signed articles by contributors do not necessarily represent the *Militant’s* views. These are expressed in editorials.

‘It’s a map, but the road leads to Israel; it is not the road to a Palestinian state’

BY SAM MANUEL

Storming a densely populated area in the occupied Gaza Strip, Israeli troops killed 13 Palestinians May 1, including a two-year old boy and two 13-year-olds. In the West Bank the Israeli army killed two other Palestinians. The early morning assaults in residential neighborhoods of the eastern part of Gaza City occurred just one day after the announcement of a new U.S.-sponsored “peace” plan backed by the European Union and Moscow, with United Nations endorsement.

Thirty army tanks, backed by at least three helicopter gunships, were involved in the attack on a residential building. Israeli authorities said they were seeking to kill members of the Palestinian organization Hamas who had allegedly prepared bombs used for suicide attacks inside Israel.

Young men from throughout the neighborhood waged a 15-hour battle against Israeli forces, which were armed with heavy machine guns, tank shells, and missiles fired from helicopters. After several hours the Palestinian combatants were able to evacuate civilians from the building. Israeli troops then blew up the building, killing Hamas leader Yusef Abu Hin, 38, and his two brothers, Ayman, 30, and Mahmud, 29, who had remained inside.

“It’s a map, but the road is to Israel. It is not a road to a Palestinian state,” said a 70-year-old woman outside the demolished building, voicing a view expressed by many Palestinians. She was referring to the White House-sponsored plan, dubbed “the road map.”

According to a summary of the three-stage plan for a “two-state solution” released by the U.S. State Department, in the first phase the Palestinian Authority would enforce an “unconditional cessation of violence” against the Israeli

regime, resume “security cooperation” with Tel Aviv, “restructure” Palestinian police forces, and carry out a “comprehensive political reform” of the Palestinian Authority, including elections and a new constitution—as deemed acceptable by Washington.

The plan was drafted at the end of last year but released only after the appointment of Mahmoud Abbas as prime minister of the Palestinian Authority, a body with limited authority over a patchwork of territory in the occupied territories. Washington and Tel Aviv have demanded “political reforms” of the Palestinian Authority to weaken and isolate Yasser Arafat, the central leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization and president of the Palestinian Authority. Abbas has publicly condemned attacks on the Israeli government.

Just hours before Abbas was sworn in, an Israeli helicopter fired two missiles at a car in the Gaza Strip, killing Nidal Salama, a leader of the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine. Two members of Al-Aqsa Brigades, the guerrilla organization associated with the Arafat-led wing of the Palestine Liberation Organization, were killed in a firefight near the group’s headquarters, Israeli military officials said.

Israeli prime minister Ariel Sharon has said he is prepared to meet with Abbas, but that Israel will only accept a Palestinian state with limited sovereignty. U.S. president George Bush has praised Abbas as a “man dedicated to peace...that I look forward to working with.”

Abbas has said he will not visit any foreign capital until Tel Aviv lifts travel restrictions imposed on Arafat, which effectively confine him to his headquarters in the West Bank city of Ramallah. Sharon has asserted that Arafat is “free” to leave but that his safe return is not guaranteed.

The so-called road map also requires Tel



Palestinian students on West Bank crossing river to attend classes at Birzeit University, near Ramallah. Closures of roads and other restrictions by Tel Aviv have made everyday life miserable for Palestinians in the occupied territories of West Bank and Gaza.

Aviv to end attacks against Palestinians, halt further expansion of Israeli settlements in the occupied territories, and to withdraw from Palestinian territories occupied since September 2000. But Sharon has insisted that the Palestinian Authority must disarm and arrest members of Hamas, the Lebanon-based resistance group Hezbollah, and other groups before there is a halt to the settlements. Hamas and Hezbollah oppose the “peace plan” and have said they will continue to fight the Israeli government.

The plan sets a timetable for establishing an independent Palestinian state by 2005 alongside the Israeli state. Dov Weinglass, chief of the Israeli prime minister’s office,

said the Israeli government opposes a set timetable. He demanded that Washington alone oversee monitoring of security issues—excluding the European Union members, Russia, and the United Nations—and that the Palestinians must drop their historic demand for the right of return to lands from which they were expelled by Israeli forces in the 1940s.

Saeb Erekat, a Palestinian Authority cabinet minister, commented that the approach of the Israeli government would “kill the road map.”

U.S. secretary of state Colin Powell traveled to Syria and Lebanon the first week in May to press for agreement from Beirut and Damascus to end their support for Hamas, Hezbollah, and other organizations that continue to oppose the Israeli regime. Powell announced that the Syrian government had agreed to close the offices of some groups in its capital.

On his arrival in Syria, Powell warned the government that the U.S. Congress had revived legislation containing sanctions against that country and that some embargo provisions of the 2001 U.S.A. Patriot Act could also be applied.

He added that with the overthrow of the Saddam Hussein government in Iraq, a “new strategic dynamic” had been created in the region and warned that Washington would “take into account” Syria’s failure to meet its demands.

At the end of the recent invasion of Iraq, Washington accused Syria of giving sanctuary to high-ranking Iraqi officials who allegedly fled the country as U.S. troops pushed to take Baghdad. U.S. officials also argued that Syria had allowed Iraqi “weapons of mass destruction” to be moved to that country.

Powell disdained to even discuss a resolution submitted to the UN Security Council by Damascus calling for the removal of such weapons from the entire Middle East. Washington’s opposition to such a measure is not surprising, because the Israeli government is widely believed to have nuclear weapons. Tel Aviv, which has refused to confirm or deny the assertion, has not signed any international treaty on the control of nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons.

Powell visited Spain before traveling to Syria to discuss how Madrid could help apply pressure on Damascus. The Spanish government sponsored the 1991 conference that led to an Israeli-Palestinian agreement known as the Oslo Accords. Madrid backed the U.S.-led war against Iraq and is eager to take the opportunity to strengthen its position as a very junior partner of U.S. imperialism in the Mideast.

Ottawa imprisons and seeks to deport Algerian based on ‘secret evidence’

BY ROBERT SIMMS

OTTAWA, Canada—More than 40 people attended a vigil here April 26 to protest the indefinite detention of Mohamed Harkat, an Algerian refugee whom the Canadian government is seeking to deport.

Harkat was arrested December 10. He has been in jail without charges since then on the basis of a “security certificate” issued by two federal cabinet ministers, the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration, and the Solicitor General.

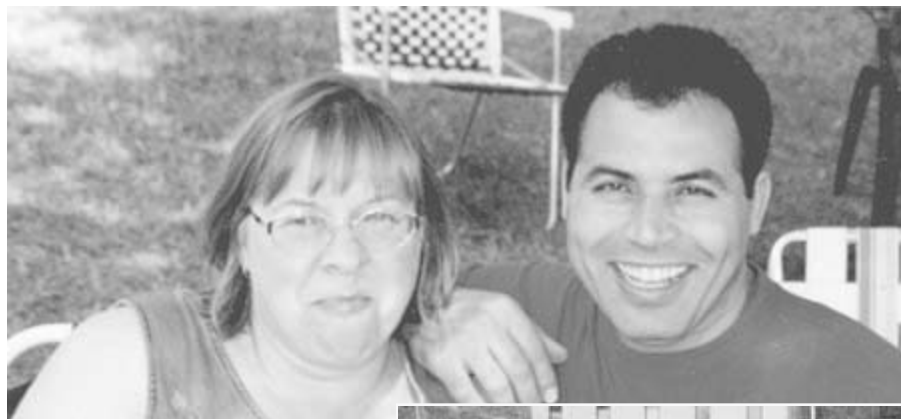
Such a certificate allows the government to arrest individuals, jail them without charges, and hold a secret trial or hearing at which neither the accused nor their lawyer have any right to see the evidence or confront any government witnesses. If a judge agrees with the government, the accused can be summarily deported. Such certificates can be used against refugees and landed immigrants (permanent residents).

The Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS) alleges that Harkat in his travels from Algeria to Canada had possible links with terrorist organizations.

Hilary Homes of the Ottawa branch of Amnesty International spoke at the vigil. “Being accused of terrorism means a different standard of justice,” she said. “I wish I could say that Mohamed Harkat’s file was the only case on my desk but in fact there are 25 to 30 such files of other people in Canada also detained under security certificates.”

Mohamed Cherfi, a spokesperson for the Non-Status Refugees Action Committee (CASS) traveled from Montreal to address the rally. CASS has mobilized hundreds of refugee applicants in Quebec from Algeria whom the Canadian government is trying to return to that country.

“I know where Mohamed would be deported,” he said. “It’s Algeria and it’s very dangerous. More than 100,000 people have been killed. One person was



Above: Mohamed and Sophie Harkat. He is an Algerian immigrant the Canadian government has detained without charges since December 10 of last year, and is trying to deport. Right: More than 40 people gathered at a protest vigil in Ottawa April 26 to demand that the Canadian government terminate its deportation proceedings against Harkat and release him from jail.



recently deported from Canada and has disappeared, and possibly killed. I want to thank Sophie for having the courage to wage this fight.” Sophie Harkat, Mohamed’s wife, has led the campaign to free her husband.

Harkat’s lawyer, Bruce Engel, noted that the trial was supposed to begin April 28 but has been postponed until the fall on a request of the defense. “We’ll be bigger and better in four months anyway,” Sophie Harkat said at the rally, referring to the new trial date.

The demands the speakers and other participants put forward at the vigil included the immediate release of Mohamed Harkat, an end to deportation proceedings against him, due process and a fair trial, abolition of the security certificate mecha-

nism, and an end to all deportations to Algeria.

In an interview with the *Militant*, Sophie Harkat noted that she had recently done a speaking tour of several cities in Ontario. She also said that the Canadian Auto Workers Union had sent a letter on behalf of her husband’s case. This fight is important, she said, because “we have to send a message that this is happening to other people as well. The government is attacking easy targets—immigrants and Muslims. But the fight is also to save Mohamed’s life.

“Before this happened to my husband, I wasn’t aware that these things took place. In working with different organizations, you realize that the government is doing things that are pretty crooked.”

THE MILITANT

on line

www.themilitant.com

New Pathfinder bookstore opens in Sweden

BY DAG TIRSÉN
AND SIGURLAUG
GUNNLAUGSDÓTTIR

GOTHENBURG, Sweden—"The Pathfinder bookstore in Gothenburg is the fourth such bookshop that opens in Europe," Anita Östling, director of the Pathfinder bookstore in Stockholm said, as she welcomed people to the grand opening of the new store here May 3.

The new bookshop is located centrally. It's about a 15-minute walk from the packinghouse area in the city and five minutes from the large SKF roller-bearing factory in a working class area in Gamlestaden. As the store opened, municipal workers across the country were expanding their strike for higher wages.

Östling said that volunteers from the Pathfinder bookstore in Stockholm have participated in the Gothenburg book fair every year since 1992. Volunteers at the Pathfinder stand have been asked many times: "Where can I get these books?" Now they can get them at the Pathfinder bookshop here, Östling said.

She explained that the bookstore was launched at this location after members of the Communist League and Young Socialists carried out consistent propaganda work in the broader area over the last 18 months including through weekly plant-gate sales and book tables in the streets.

Volunteers transformed a raw basement into a nice looking bookstore, with funds contributed by supporters of this effort from Gothenburg, Stockholm, and Malmö. The carpet was laid by a meat packer who is a co-worker of the director of the new bookstore, Dag Tirsén. Architecture students from Gothenburg helped with the acoustics.

Jonathan Silberman from the Communist League and the director of Pathfinder distribution in London, in the United Kingdom, was one of the featured speakers. He described the importance of expanding the sales of Pathfinder literature, as well as



Militant/Diana Newberry

Participants in May 3 launching of new Pathfinder bookstore in Gothenburg.

the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, in today's world of growing capitalist disorder and economic depression. "The imperialist rulers are following up their assault on Iraq with a war drive directed against Iran," he said. "These books contain and develop the communist program decisive to building a revolutionary movement in Sweden and other capitalist countries as the class struggle sharpens."

Turcios Esquivel, second secretary of the embassy of Cuba in Sweden, was a special guest. He took the occasion to speak out against the recent escalation of the imperialist-orchestrated campaign against Cuba. The big-business media and capitalist politicians throughout Europe, he noted, claim that the 75 opponents of the Cuban Revolution arrested in March, and three men tried and executed after hijacking a ferry in Havana, were all "dissidents" punished for their political views. The 75 were "mercenaries" working to overthrow

the Cuban government financed by Washington, Esquivel said. The hijackers were common criminals who put in danger the lives of many Cubans and tourists, and their actions were encouraged by Washington's refusal to prosecute any hijackers commandeering Cuban craft or vessels to Florida, and by limiting the number of visas the U.S. government gives to Cubans applying to emigrate, he said.

The 75 opponents of the revolution Esquivel was referring to were convicted in April on charges of collaboration with Washington, a hostile state power, to subvert Cuban sovereignty and overthrow the revolution. The trial and the execution of the three men took place after a string of similar armed hijackings of Cuban boats and planes since last summer.

Catharina Tirsén, a leader of the Communist League in Sweden who chaired the event pointed to a recent debate in the letters page of the daily *Göteborg Posten*

on the propaganda campaign against Cuba. She also took the occasion to condemn the position of Anna Lind, foreign minister of Sweden, who was amongst the first to attack the sentences of the 75. She encouraged participants to learn the truth about the Cuban Revolution, and pointed to an attractive photo display in the bookstore of Pathfinder's participation in this year's Havana International Book Fair. Tirsén read a message sent to the celebration from Pathfinder's French-language editor, Michel Prairie. The new bookshop, Prairie wrote, will aid the reconquering of "Marxist culture among the fighting vanguard of workers and farmers around the world."

Andreas Bergerheim, a member of the Young Socialists and a packing house worker, talked about the books on the shelves, some of which he had recently read and helped him understand what the working class can accomplish to change society.

Many in the audience had joined the international campaign to defend Róger Calero, co-editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*, against the attempts by U.S. immigration authorities to deport him from the United States. The audience applauded when Joel Britton, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party in the United States, announced the good news that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security has moved to terminate the effort to exclude Calero from that country and raised the possibility of a victory tour in Sweden.

The more than 20 participants, many of them young, came from Stockholm and Gothenburg, as well as the United Kingdom, Iceland, and the United States. A number had first bumped into Pathfinder books at a Communist League book table during the May Day demonstration here two days earlier. One of them picked up a subscription to the *Militant* and a copy of *Capitalism's World Disorder*. Participants contributed the equivalent of \$150 towards a fund to cover the costs of opening the new bookstore.

—MILITANT LABOR FORUMS—

NEW JERSEY

Newark
**The Conquest of Iraq and
Washington's Trade Push in Africa**

A benefit for the Militant Fund. Speaker: Sam Manuel, *Militant* Washington DC Bureau chief. Friday, May 9, Dinner 6:30 p.m., Program 7:30 p.m. 168 Bloomfield Ave. 2nd Floor. Donation \$10 (973) 481-0077.

GEORGIA

Atlanta
**Washington's Imperialist Occupation of
Iraq: The Revolutionary Road to National
Liberation and the Example of Cuba.** A benefit for the Militant Fund. Speaker: Paul Pederson, *Militant* staff writer, Sunday, May 11, Dinner 3:00 p.m., Program 4:00 p.m. 2791 Lakewood Ave. Donation: Dinner \$7, Program \$5. (404) 763-2900.

—CALENDAR—

NEW ZEALAND

**A Saharawi woman Speaks out
on Independence Struggle**

Fatima Mahfoud, a representative of Polisario, will visit Australia and New Zealand to speak about the struggle for independence of Western Sahara and the role of women in it.

Auckland Thursday May 22
7:30 p.m., St. Columba Centre, 40 Vermont St., Ponsonby. Contact Felicity Coggan 09 579 5707.

Dunedin Saturday May 24
5:30 p.m. dinner meeting at the Age Concern Rooms, The Octagon. Contact Marie Laufiso 03 477 3395.

Christchurch Monday May 26
7:30 p.m., PEETO, 201 Peterborough St. (cnr Madras). Contact Annalucia Vermunt 03 377 3834.

Wellington Thursday May 29
5:30-7:30 p.m., ground floor, Turnbull House, 25 Bowen St. Contact Kirsten Forsyth 04 934 2289.

Thousands celebrate as Navy leaves Vieques

Continued from front page

Vieques, or rode on horseback into the previously restricted areas, as they participated in a symbolic "invasion" of the military-run territory.

A U.S. Navy official signed the transfer nine hours before the scheduled departure time, and the last remaining U.S. military personnel turned over their guard and vacated the facilities well before midnight.

Since World War II, the U.S. military has occupied large parts of this small island off the eastern coast of Puerto Rico, using it for bombing and live-ammunition exercises. The Navy forcibly removed local farmers and fishermen from their property—giving many of them 24 hours to leave—and took over 26,000 acres of Vieques land to set up a bombing range, an ammunition dump, and other military facilities.

Used for imperialist assaults

For generation after generation, fishermen and other residents protested the Navy's takeover of the island. They opposed the use of Vieques as a training ground for launching Washington's wars of aggression abroad, such as the 1983 invasion of Grenada, the 1989 invasion of Panama, the 1999 bombing assault on Yugoslavia, and the wars on Iraq.

They also protested the Navy's devastation of the island's economy as well as the environmental hazards caused by the bombing and military presence, which contributed to a high incidence of cancer and other health problems among residents.

The struggle against the U.S. military kept reemerging—in the 1960s, as the Cuban Revolution helped spur a renewed independence struggle, in the late 1970s, and then again in 1999. On April 19 of that year, a 500-pound "inert" bomb dropped by a U.S. Navy plane during a training exercise killed a local civilian guard, David Sanes. That was the detonator for a new, sustained wave of protests.

The Vieques movement was part of a broader rise of anticolonial sentiment throughout Puerto Rico, expressed in a struggle spearheaded by the telephone workers to prevent the sale of the state-owned phone company whose high point



Alberto de Jesús Mercado replaces U.S. flag on Navy tower with Vieques flag May 1.

was a two-day general strike by half a million workers in July 1998—and the campaign to free pro-independence political prisoners, which won amnesty for 11 patriots in September 1999.

Demonstrators repeatedly took to the streets of Puerto Rico and U.S. cities with large Puerto Rican populations to demand the Navy's withdrawal. Some protests in Puerto Rico drew tens of thousands.

After Sanes's death, groups of fishermen, teachers, and other protesters carried out civil disobedience actions. They entered Navy-run territory and set up encampments, some of them in the area of the bombing range. For a year the Navy suspended its bombing practice.

In face of these sustained demonstrations, U.S. president William Clinton signed an agreement in January 2000 with the colonial governor, Pedro Roselló of the pro-statehood party, stipulating that the U.S. Navy would withdraw by May 2003 if Vieques residents voted for such an action in a referendum. In the meantime the bombing exercises would resume with "inert" shells.

On May 4, 2000, the White House sent 100 U.S. marshals and 200 FBI agents, backed up by warships with 1,200 marines,

to evict all the protesters on the Navy-occupied land. The predawn raid took place in the wake of an April 22 SWAT-style assault by U.S. immigration cops and marshals on a house in Miami, ordered by the Clinton administration in the name of returning a Cuban child, Elián González, to his father.

Refused to give up

Despite this show of force, protesters were not deterred and continued civil disobedience actions. Hundreds were prosecuted and jailed. The U.S. government sought to use its stepped-up war drive after 9/11 to intimidate demonstrators. Despite this pressure, marches, rallies, and pickets continued.

The pro-autonomy colonial administration of Sila Calderón, which had won office on the promise of getting the Navy to end its bombings, organized a nonbinding referendum in July 2001. A two-thirds majority voted for the immediate withdrawal of the U.S. military.

Facing a clear defeat, the U.S. authorities canceled the referendum they had scheduled for November 2001. The Bush administration said it would abide by the previous agreement and withdraw the Navy

Continued on page 14

Soapboxers bolster N.Y. sales of ‘Militant’

BY PATRICK O’NEILL

“The goals of the bosses and the goals of the workers are far different,” said a New York transit worker to socialists selling the *Militant* at Union Square as he bought an introductory subscription to the newspaper. “We are not family and cannot be.”

Socialist workers soapboxed with a battery-powered bullhorn, said Dan Fein, drawing passersby to the display of revolutionary books and newspapers. “We took turns to speak,” he said. “We emphasized that Washington’s war in the Mideast is an extension of the rulers’ attacks on working people here—including the city government’s layoffs and budget cuts that affect thousands of workers.”

Through such efforts, *Militant* supporters in New York and a number of other cities in the United States and other countries have made up ground over the past week in the international subscription drive (see chart). Halfway through the campaign, sales of *Militant* subscriptions stand at 46 percent of the goal—four percentage points behind schedule. Sales of subscriptions to *Perspectiva Mundial*, the Spanish-language sister publication of the *Militant*, are a little further behind at 40 percent. The biggest lag is in sales of *Capitalism’s World Disorder* and three issues of the Marxist magazine *New International*. Sales of these books stand at 27 percent of the target.

Workers connected to or involved in resistance to the bosses’ demands for speedup and cuts in wages and benefits have responded well to the *Militant*, reported Jacquie Henderson from Houston. “Five Machinists at the Lockheed plant in Fort Worth signed up for introductory subscriptions during their April 14–27 strike,” she said. “We had lively discussions with strikers on a range of issues—from solidarity with the meat packers who

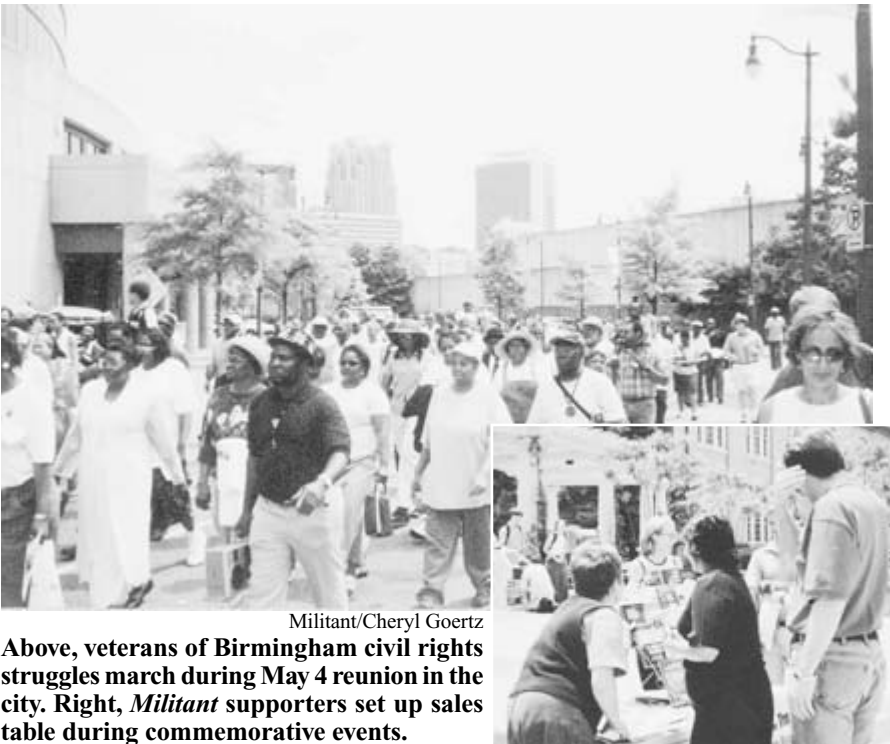
have walked out against Tyson Foods in Wisconsin, to affirmative action, to Washington’s war on Iraq.

“Workers did not agree with every article they saw in the *Militant*,” she said, “but they appreciated a paper that gives a voice to workers defending their rights.”

Meat packers at Tysons plant in Houston have bought several copies of *Perspectiva Mundial* out of interest in the Wisconsin strike, said Henderson.

Chessie Molano has sold several issues of the *Militant* to fellow passengers on the bus she takes home from the Chicago garment plant in which she works. During one ride, she said, a man “was looking over my shoulder, reading an article by Ma’mud Shirvani on the Iranian revolution. He read the entire article, and remarked, ‘My brother is in Iraq. Where did you get that paper?’”

Another Chicago campaigner, Pattie Thompson, told the *Militant* of a new subscriber to *Perspectiva Mundial* who took advantage of the special offer on *Capitalism’s World Disorder*. “She is from Mexico and is married to



Militant/Cheryl Goertz

Above, veterans of Birmingham civil rights struggles march during May 4 reunion in the city. Right, *Militant* supporters set up sales table during commemorative events.

a Palestinian man,” Thompson said. “She told me, ‘You have to be a bit of a rebel, to not just take what they tell you but to look for books, to find out for yourself.’”

These accomplishments, a sampling of similar results around the world, indicate that partisans of the *Militant* can meet all the goals, including in book sales, as long as they continue consistent efforts over the next four weeks.

Militant Fund picks up pace

Continued from front page

tions among working people and politically active youth who have contributed to the \$85,000 fund campaign that makes it possible to publish them.

Contributions received have now jumped up to \$48,444, some 57 percent of the goal. With one week left in the drive and more than \$36,000 outstanding to reach the international goal, campaigners in every area are making it a top priority to collect the final payments and send them in to arrive at the *Militant* offices by the Tuesday, May 13, deadline.

Here are reports of highlights this past week.

From France: A few minutes ago I received word that we have surpassed our goal of \$300. Our total now stands at \$305 received, as two more contributions were received during the May Day demonstrations in Paris and one during the demonstrations in Marseilles. —*Nat London*

From Canada: *Militant* supporters here have raised \$3,211 out of our \$4,011 goal. In Toronto, five meatpacking workers at the Quality Meat plant have contributed \$30 to the fund. —*Michel Prairie*

From Washington, D.C.: A May 3 benefit here celebrated the launching of the *Militant’s* Washington bureau. Featured speakers were *Militant* editor Argiris Malapanis and D.C. Bureau chief Sam Manuel, who will be covering political events in the Southeast region. He will submit articles from a new office located in the Pathfinder bookstore here. Participants contributed some \$700 toward the fund at the meeting.

“The coverage of the Iraq war has been excellent and seems to get better each week. The background articles and editorials have been very helpful. The Washington Bureau is an exciting idea,” wrote rail worker Jim Sarsgard from Baltimore in a message to the meeting. —*Janice Lynn*

From Los Angeles: Featured speaker Jacob Perasso, a meat packer from Omaha, Nebraska, said he and several coworkers, organized through their union, drove a van to participate in a rally to support the Tyson workers’ strike in Jefferson, Wisconsin. “The refusal of these workers to subordinate their struggle to ‘national unity’ and ‘homeland defense’ is the beginning of working-class resistance to imperialist war,” Perasso said.

Among those attending the brunch reception and afternoon meeting, which raised nearly \$2,000, were four students and workers who plan to participate in the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange. One of the four, José Velásquez, a construction worker who urged everyone to subscribe to the *Militant*, said that people he met on a recent trip to southern Mexico and Guatemala “were interested in the fact that a group like the Socialist Workers Party could function in the United States.” —*Nan Bailey*

From Tampa, Florida: A meeting here featured James Harris, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party in Atlanta, on

“Defending Cuba’s Sovereignty, Defending Cuba’s Socialist Revolution.” It drew people from throughout central Florida, including five students. More than \$870 was raised at the event [for fuller report see letter on page 15]. —*Rachele Fruit*

Militant/Perspectiva Mundial Subscription Drive April 5–June 1: Week 4 of 8								
Country	Militant			PM			Book	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold		Goal	Sold
AUSTRALIA	30	19	63%	5	0		12	4
CANADA								
Vancouver	35	16	46%	5	3		15	9
Toronto	30	11	37%	5	1		25	2
Montreal	12	3	25%	4	4		15	9
CANADA total	77	30	39%	14	8		55	20
ICELAND	15	8	53%	1	0		8	6
NEW ZEALAND								
Christchurch	16	7	44%	1	0		4	0
Auckland	20	10	50%	1	0		5	3
N.Z. total	36	17	47%	2	0		9	3
SWEDEN								
Stockholm	10	3	30%	2	0		4	2
Gothenburg	12	3	25%	2	0		8	3
SWEDEN Total	22	6	27%	4	0		12	5
UNITED KINGDOM								
London	40	13	33%	15	2		25	9
Cent. Scotland	12	1	8%	1	0		8	0
UK total	52	14	27%	16	2		33	9
UNITED STATES								
Des Moines	25	19	76%	12	3		12	4
San Francisco	35	26	74%	15	4		25	5
Omaha	17	12	71%	31	13		17	8
Los Angeles	45	30	67%	20	13		20	16
Newark	55	32	58%	20	12		30	14
NE Pennsylvania	20	11	55%	6	2		10	7
Houston	25	13	52%	10	0		25	0
Western Colorado	18	9	50%	12	8		10	3
Utah	10	5	50%	5	2		10	2
Twin Cities	45	22	49%	35	21		25	1
Tampa	25	12	48%	10	6		15	4
Washington	25	12	48%	12	1		15	3
Chicago	40	19	48%	25	14		25	4
Boston	35	16	46%	15	5		25	4
New York	100	45	45%	40	16		60	21
Detroit	25	11	44%	8	2		12	3
Miami	32	14	44%	10	0		25	4
Philadelphia	30	13	43%	7	5		10	0
Seattle	30	13	43%	8	1		20	1
Atlanta	35	15	43%	15	10		25	5
Tucson	10	4	40%	2	1		6	0
Charlotte	20	7	35%	8	2		16	2
Cleveland	20	6	30%	8	1		18	2
Pittsburgh	30	8	27%	3	0		0	1
Birmingham	20	5	25%	5	4		10	2
U.S. total	772	379	49%	342	146		466	116
Int'l totals	1042	473	47%	384	156		595	163
Goal/Should be	1000	500	50%	375	188		600	300
IN THE UNIONS								
	Militant			PM			Book	
	Goal	Sold	%	Goal	Sold		Goal	Sold
AUSTRALIA								
AMIEU	4	2	50%				2	0
MUA	4	1	25%				2	0
Total	8	3	38%				4	0
CANADA								
UFCW	9	3	33%	2	0		9	0
UNITE	4	0	0%	5	1		6	2
UNITE	0	0	0%	0	0		0	0
Total	13	3	23%	7	1		15	2
ICELAND								
Efling	1	0	0%				1	0
NEW ZEALAND								
MWU	2	0	0%				1	0
NDU	2	1	50%				1	0
Total	4	1	25%				2	0
UNITED STATES								
UFCW	50	17	34%	75	24		40	7
UMWA	15	5	27%	4	6		10	0
UNITE	25	8	28%	20	5		20	3
Total	90	25	28%	99	35		70	10

\$85,000 Militant Fund March 10—May12: Week 8 of 9			
	Goal	Paid	%
Cleveland OH	1,100	920	83%
Boston MA	2,800	2,325	83%
Charlotte NC	3,000	2,290	76%
Northeast PA	1,600	1,200	75%
Washington DC	2,200	1,625	73%
Detroit MI	3,000	2,156	72%
New York NY	9,400	6,522	69%
Los Angeles CA	7,500	5,045	67%
Atlanta GA	4,100	2,620	64%
Utah	800	500	63%
Seattle WA	6,000	3,738	62%
Des Moines IA	900	520	58%
Philadelphia PA	3,000	1,705	57%
Houston TX	3,200	1,690	53%
Newark NJ	3,800	1,805	48%
Miami FL	1,600	690	43%
Tucson AZ	250	100	40%
Chicago IL	4,200	1,634	39%
Omaha NE	900	309	34%
San Francisco CA	7,000	2,335	33%
Pittsburgh PA	3000	775	26%
Birmingham AL	2,500	590	24%
Twin Cities MN	4,300	950	22%
Western CO	2,500	227	9%
Tampa FL	1,800	150	8%
Other		506	
US Total	80,450	42,927	53%
France	300	305	102%
Canada	3,460	3,211	93%
New Zealand	1,500	1,120	75%
Australia	1,440	820	57%
Iceland	150	50	33%
United Kingdom	500	10	2%
Sweden	400	0	0%
International total	88,200	48,443	55%
Int'l goal/should be	85,000	75,650	89%

Cuban paper covers antideportation effort

The article below was printed in the March 23 *Granma Internacional*, a weekly newspaper published in Cuba in Spanish, English, and other languages. The article appeared under the headline, “Róger Calero: immigrant, socialist and journalist—three reasons to expel him from the United States.”



BY FELIX CAPOTE

The name Róger Calero is virtually unknown in U.S. mainstream press circles. Nevertheless, he is a prestigious journalist, associate editor of the Spanish language publication *Perspectiva Mundial* and editorial team member at socialist weekly the *Militant*.

Calero is also the youngest member on the national committee of the Socialist Workers Party; a position to which he was elected in 2002.

His name was first heard after he was detained on December 3 last year when returning from a reporting assignment in Cuba and Mexico and then imprisoned in a private jail for 10 days.

He had come to Havana to report on an important Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) conference, traveling on to the International Book Fair in Guadalajara, Mexico plus a student conference organized by the Continental Organization of Latin American and Caribbean Students (OCLAE).

The Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) arrested him on his arrival at Houston, Texas, on his way back from Mexico.

Of Nicaraguan origin, Calero has been in the United States for 17 years (12 as a permanent resident), and is married to a U.S. citizen. Before taking up journalism, he worked as a meat packer in several different plants where he excelled as a union leader.

The immigration police attempted to deny him re-entry to the United States and deport him to Nicaragua, basing their decision on a 1988 conviction when, as a junior high student in Los Angeles, he was accused of selling an ounce of marijuana to an undercover police officer.

At the time, he received a 60-day suspended sentence with 3 years probation, in the course of which he had no other brushes with the law. Two years later, he applied for and received permanent residency without the slightest difficulty.

Private jails: good business

The INS prison in Houston, where Calero was held for 10 days is a private business run by the Corrections Corporation of America (CCA). Its website boasts of being the oldest and most important firm of its kind, with shares listed on the New York Stock Exchange.

The Houston prison is one of six INS prisons that are operated by firms like the CCA, which has 15 nation-wide. In total, there are 158 penal institutions currently managed by private firms in the United States, the state of Texas, with 42, has the largest number.

The CCA runs 61 jails in 21 states plus the District of Columbia. According to the latest statistics from the Department

of Justice, 91,828 people were incarcerated in private jails at the end of 2001.

Calero's detention and the battle on his behalf after he was freed and threatened with deportation at the end of three months clearly demonstrate current INS anti-immigrant policies.

Thousands of immigrants find themselves in a similar situation to his: detained after returning from family or other visits abroad.

In the last few months the federal government has been collating local courts' records and including them in the institution's computer system.

In 2001, the INS processed almost 177,000 individuals and summarily deported 70,000 immigrants.

Calero publicly denounced that tens of thousands of U.S. residents are being subjected to exclusion or deportation based on provisions contained in the 1996 Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act and other reactionary measures.

Many immigrants see this INS policy as a direct threat to the basic rights and freedoms in the United States: a free press, the right to travel, and the freedom of political and religious beliefs.

If on March 25 the INS decides, as



Calero (top right) and four others facing deportation at Houston privately-managed immigration jail December 2002. *Granma* published this photo along with article.

appears to be its aim, to expel Calero, or whether it accepts the petitions signed by thousands of U.S. citizens and allows him to continue working as a journalist in the United States, a new battle will have been fought.

This is a battle for press freedom and civil rights against the extreme right, who

since September have been seeking absolute power in Washington under the pretext of fighting terrorism.

Independent of the result, Calero's case will have served to highlight the persecution currently undertaken in the United States against immigrants, especially those of Latin American origin.

U.S. Supreme Court mandates the detention of immigrants without bail

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Permanent residents of the United States convicted in the past even for minor offenses can be imprisoned indefinitely without bail while the federal government seeks to deport them, the Supreme Court decided April 29. The ruling upheld the Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act signed into law in 1996 by then-president William Clinton.

That legislation expanded the number of crimes for which a person can be deported to include a range of misdemeanors, as minor as jumping a turnstile or shoplifting, redefining them as “aggravated felonies.” The law was made retroactive, meaning that even small infractions on a person's record that happened years ago—before the law was enacted—could be used as the basis for deportation proceedings today. Immigrants who had been granted legal residency with the 1986 nationwide amnesty faced losing their legal status after the 1996 law was passed if they had a conviction on their records. While *la migrá* has carried out factory raids to round up and deport undocumented workers, it has usually not sought out permanent residents who are in this situation. Instead, legal residents have been mostly victimized when they leave the country and try to return, when they went to immigration authorities for a change in their status or some other reason, or if they are subsequently arrested on a criminal charge.

An estimated 11 million immigrants currently living and working in the United States with a “green card” are also denied under the 1996 law the protection from

being punished twice for the same offense—called double jeopardy. In addition, they are denied the right to a bail hearing, where the accused can ask the court to be released on bond.

It was this latter provision of the 1996 law that Hyung Joon Kim, a Korean immigrant, had challenged as unconstitutional in the case the Supreme Court just ruled on—*DeMore v. Kim*.

Kim, 25, a student at San Jose State University today, immigrated to northern California from south Korea in 1984 at age 6. While still a child, he became a permanent resident. In 1996, when he was a teenager, he was convicted for first-degree burglary for breaking into a toolshed and was sentenced to 180 days in jail. The following year, while still on probation, Kim was convicted for “petty theft with priors.”

“I was at Costco with two of my buddies,” Kim told *The Guardian* newspaper in an interview published January 15. “One of them ended up stealing. Me and my other friend, we didn't steal anything, but we knew of our buddy stealing. We walked out together.” The youth served two years of a three-year sentence in a state penitentiary in California and was released early for good behavior in 1999. Immigration and Naturalization Service agents then arrested Kim and began deportation proceedings against him based on the 1996 law. The INS held the south Korean immigrant without bail, like tens of thousands of others in similar situations.

After more than three months in custody, Kim filed a petition in court arguing that the 1996 immigration law's no-bail provision violated his constitutional rights. A federal district court and then later the U.S. Court of Appeals in the Ninth Circuit in San Francisco agreed, and Kim was released Aug. 20, 1999, after six months in detention, pending the high court's decision.

The Justice Department appealed the decision of the federal courts, echoing the arguments of the Clinton administration when the law was first passed in 1996. First, the Justice Department argued that it is necessary to deport foreign-born residents for even minor offenses in order to stem a “growing problem” of immigrants committing crimes. Secondly, the government claimed that immigrants facing deportation under the 1996 law should be automatically jailed during the process, regardless of the circumstances of their case, because there is a high risk that they will not show up for their hearings.

In a 5–4 vote, the Supreme Court sided with the government and overturned these decisions of the lower courts.

Chief Justice of the Supreme Court William Rehnquist, who wrote the majority decision, said that “Congress regularly makes rules that would be unacceptable if applied to citizens”—an argument that helps the ruling class justify codifying divisions between native- and foreign-born workers.

“We hold that Congress, justifiably concerned that deportable criminal aliens who are not detained continue to engage in crime and fail to appear for their removal hearings in large numbers, may require that persons... be detained from the brief period necessary for their removal proceedings,” Rehnquist said.

In the case of Palestinian activist Farouk Abdel Muhti currently locked up without charges in the York County jail in Pennsylvania facing deportation—and many other immigrants languishing in *la migrá*'s prisons—the “brief period” of imprisonment that Rehnquist refers to can last many months and even years.

Rehnquist added that the sharp increase in deportation and detentions is justified because immigrants are committing more and more crimes. The 1996 law, he said, was passed in the “backdrop of wholesale failure by the Immigration and Naturalization Service to deal with the increasing rates of criminal activity by aliens.”

Justice David Souter, who wrote the minority opinion in the Kim case, stated, “This case is not about the national government's undisputed power to detain aliens in order to avoid flight or prevent danger to the community. The issue is whether that power may be exercised by detaining a still lawful permanent resident alien when there is no reason for it and no way to challenge it.”

Imprisonment of foreign-born residents in the United States has skyrocketed under the mandatory detention clause since passage of the 1996 law. Since the year 2000, more than 20,000 immigrants languish in U.S. jails at any given time while the government seeks their deportation. The immigrant prison population has more than tripled in the last eight years. According to a report published by Citizens and Immigrants for Equal Justice, “Mandatory detention has made noncitizens the fastest growing prison population in the country.”

For Kim, and thousands of other legal residents who are subject to this law and have lived in the United States most of their lives, deportation to the country where they were born is more like exile. “Korea is more foreign to me than America,” he said. “I speak Korean, but not to the point where I could get a job. I would have a very tough time over there.”

From Pathfinder

The Changing Face of U.S. Politics

Working-Class Politics and the Trade Unions

by Jack Barnes

Building the kind of party the working class needs to prepare for coming class battles—battles through which they will revolutionize themselves, their unions, and all of society. It is a handbook for workers, farmers, and youth repelled by the class inequalities, economic instability, racism, women's oppression, cop violence, and wars endemic to capitalism, and who are determined to overturn that exploitative system and join in reconstructing the world on new, socialist foundations. \$23.00

Also available in Spanish and French

Order online at www.pathfinderpress.com



Victory in Calero antideportation fight

Continued from front page

Regulations:

“The notice was improvidently issued, or,

“Circumstances of the case have changed after the notice to appear was issued to such an extent that continuation is no longer in the best interest of the government.”

Calero’s attorney, Claudia Slovinsky, is now contacting the Justice Department in an effort to get a final ruling on the motion to terminate the deportation case. She will also take steps to secure the return of his permanent resident card and his passport for international travel, which are still in the possession of the immigration police.

‘The fight is not over’

“The fight is not over,” Calero told the *Militant*. “We will continue to need help from supporters of immigrant rights, the labor movement, and defenders of freedom of the press. And we need to raise funds for our legal and publicity expenses.”

On the evening of December 3, Calero, a staff writer for the *Militant* and associate editor of the Spanish-language monthly magazine *Perspectiva Mundial*, which are published in New York, was detained by immigration agents at the Houston airport on his return from a reporting trip in Cuba and Mexico, and locked up in an INS prison.

After learning of his arrest, Calero’s colleagues at the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* and others launched a public campaign to demand that the INS release the journalist and drop its exclusion proceedings against him.

Calero, 34, has lived in the United States for 18 years, since 1985, when his family moved here from Nicaragua. He has been a permanent resident since 1990. When he filed his application for residency in 1989, he specifically included the information about his plea-bargain conviction in high school on charges of selling an ounce of marijuana to an undercover cop—which immigration officials waived in order to grant him a green card giving him the right to live and work in the United States. In the year 2000, INS officials renewed Calero’s permanent residency card, again waiving the full written record of his conviction.

In a *Militant* interview in January of this year, Calero said, “I have found that my case strikes a chord with a lot of people. There are thousands and thousands of immigrant workers who are being picked up by the INS as they return from visits abroad.” In 2001 the INS formally removed almost 177,000 people. More than 70,000 immigrants were summarily deported for “criminal violations.”

While in the INS prison Calero wrote articles for the socialist publications telling the truth about the conditions and the stories of others behind prison walls. In “Inside an INS jail in Houston,” first published in the December 23 *Militant*, Calero reported that the jailers were moving people in and out so quickly that everyone was known by their bunk number and the letter T or B, to indicate whether they have a top or bottom bunk. Calero was 804B.

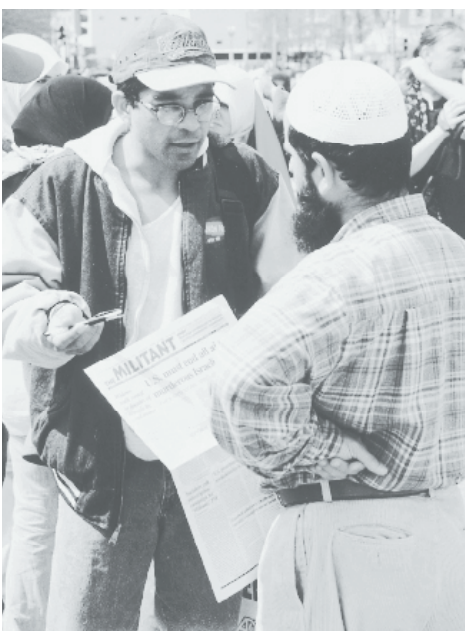
Letters of protest poured in to the INS. They came from outraged journalists like Jeremy Dear, general secretary of the National Union of Journalists in the United Kingdom, from union officials such as Bill Pearson of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), and from petitions signed by hundreds of workers, including 50 meat packers at the Dakota Premium Foods meat-packing plant. Before his current job as an editor of *Perspectiva Mundial*, Calero was a member of UFCW Local 789 and worked at the Dakota Premium plant in South St. Paul, Minnesota, where he was part of a groundbreaking union-organizing drive.

The public protest campaign paid off. On December 13, ten days after he was locked up, Calero was released from detention in Houston and put on parole the first important victory in the fight. As John Studer, executive director of the Political Rights Defense Fund (PRDF), said at a December 15 meeting to celebrate Calero’s release, “The INS made a calculated counter-move.” The government was trying to “defuse, confuse, and slow down the defense campaign” by removing “the rawest aspect” of the INS’s actions, “the fact that he was thrown in jail and faced a threat of immediate exclusion.”

PRDF, which has a decades-long history



Calero defense campaign supporters petition at January 18 antiwar rally in Washington, D.C. (left). Róger Calero selling *Militant* at Palestinian rights protest (right).



Militant

of participation in civil liberties campaigns, took responsibility for initiating Calero’s fight immediately after his jailing.

Calero defense committee formed

The Róger Calero Defense Committee was formed in January, with Studer as the coordinator. The chairpeople of the committee are José Oliva, director of the Interfaith Workers’ Rights Center in Chicago; Martha Olvera, coordinator of the Coalition for Dignity and Amnesty in Houston; Bill Pearson, president of UFCW Local 789; and Pamela Vossen, national grievance officer for the National Writers Union.

The antideportation campaign kicked off a national speaking tour for Calero. Having won his release from the INS jail, Calero hit the road from Christmas 2002 through April of this year to speak out about his case and to link up with others in struggle in the United States.

The kickoff of the tour coincided with other struggles against increasing government attacks on immigrant rights from “special registration” imposed on immigrants from 20 Mideast and Asian countries to stepped-up deportations of workers for convictions on petty criminal charges.

The fight received valuable media coverage. *La Opinión*, the principle Spanish-language daily in Los Angeles, published the story, “Latino journalist fights deportation,” in its January 15 edition. New York *Newsday* wrote about Calero’s case February 9 in an article titled, “Rallying immigrants over rights: Facing deportation, reporter speaks out to educate public.” Calero was interviewed on radio stations across the country. On March 13, *Univisión*, the largest Spanish-language television network in the United States, featured an interview with Calero and *Perspectiva Mundial* editor Martín Koppel at the publication’s offices in New York in the TV show *Aquí y Ahora* (Hear and Now).

After hearing about the case in the media, immigrant workers came to defense committee events in St. Paul, Chicago, New York, Tampa and other cities to hear about the case and to reach others with their own stories about the abuses of the immigration cops. After attending a program at the University of Utah in Salt Lake City, a student from Turkey volunteered to translate defense committee literature into Turkish. Defense committee materials have also been translated into Spanish, French, Arabic, Greek, Swedish, Catalan, and Urdu.

Soon after Calero was released from the immigration jail in December, the INS set a March 25 hearing in Houston to rule on his case. Calero’s attorney filed a motion to move the location for the hearing from Houston to the New York area, where he lives and works. On March 4, INS officials filed a letter with an immigration judge stating they had “chosen not to oppose” the change in venue. A new hearing date was set for September 10 in Newark, New Jersey. After this second victory in his fight, Calero told the *Militant*, “This will encourage supporters of my defense campaign to step up their efforts” to demand that deportation proceedings be dropped altogether.

Many workers involved in strikes and other struggles in the Midwest, especially

meat packers, took on Calero’s fight as their own. UFCW Local 789 hosted a fund-raiser January 11 and its members helped take responsibility for building and organizing the event.

Workers make fight their own

In Chicago unionists and other workers put their stamp on a program attended by some 90 people. Workers who are part of the struggle against the American Meat-packing Corp., which closed down in November 2001, helped on security and mounted a display on their fight to gain back wages owed by the company. Members of Latino Union, an organization of temporary workers and day laborers, participated in the program. Elvira Arrellano, an aircraft cleaner, spoke on the fight she has helped lead against a December 2002 INS raid at O’Hare Airport that placed 46 workers under arrest.

“Faced with a crisis in their economy, and worldwide depression conditions, employers are on the offensive against all working people,” Calero told the Chicago gathering. “They want to make us bear the burden of their crisis so they can maintain their profits. This is why we see the brutal conditions in the workplace, the police brutality, and the massacre they are preparing against the people of Iraq.”

Calero’s national tour was supplemented by speaking engagements by other defense committee leaders and supporters. Bill

Washington fails to block Cuba from UN commission

BY PAUL PEDERSON

Despite efforts by Washington to pressure other governments to vote it off, Cuba was reelected April 29 to another three-year term on the 54-member United Nations Human Rights Commission, a body Cuba has served on for the last 15 years.

U.S. officials had campaigned intensely against Cuba’s inclusion on the commission. They argued that the Cuban government is a repressive regime that it did not deserve to serve on that body.

When the vote was taken, the U.S. delegation demonstratively walked out of the meeting. “It was an outrage for us because we view Cuba as the worst violator of human rights in this hemisphere,” U.S. representative Sichan Siv huffed.

The latest moves at the UN commission are part of an escalation over the past year of the U.S. government’s 44-year-long drive to undermine and overthrow the Cuban Revolution.

Washington has sought to portray the recent prosecution of 75 opponents of the revolution in Cuba, as well as the trials and executions of three armed hijackers, as a crackdown on ideas. It has used this pretext to threaten new sanctions against Cuba, including a ban on remittances by Cuban-Americans to relatives on the island and the suspension of charter flights from the United States.

The election to the commission, despite Washington’s efforts, “constitutes a new

Pearson, for example, carried out a two-day tour of Des Moines, Iowa, and Omaha, Nebraska, in mid-March to win support for the case of his local’s former member.

Support for the case extended around the world. On March 6, at its 16th general assembly in Havana, Cuba, the World Federation of Democratic Youth passed a resolution endorsing Calero’s defense campaign. Representatives of 31 youth groups from 30 countries including Algeria, South Africa, Paraguay, El Salvador, India, China, Korea, Japan, Germany, and Palestine endorsed the campaign as well. High school students and others in Iceland, Sweden, and the United Kingdom became partisans of the fight during a speaking tour in these countries by Young Socialists leader Lawrence Mikesch, who is based in Miami, Florida.

Victory tour on the horizon

The May 1 motion by the Department of Homeland Security to end deportation proceedings “encourages me to go on with the struggle,” said Calero. “I will continue to speak out against the outrageous jailings of Farouk Abdel-Muhti, Sami Al-Arian, Omar Jamal, the five Cuban revolutionaries imprisoned in U.S. jails on frame-up charges of ‘conspiring’ to spy, and others. The victory in my fight helps to expose the violations of immigrant and workers’ rights that go on every day.”

Calero said he especially looks forward to refocusing his energies on what he was doing before the INS detained him on December 3—writing for *Perspectiva Mundial* and the *Militant*, telling the truth about the resistance of workers and farmers to the employers’ offensive against their rights, and the worldwide fight for socialism.

“When we nail down the final pieces of this fight, and my green card and passport are returned to me, I’ll be going on a victory tour,” said Calero. “I want to share this accomplishment with those who have joined me in this struggle. I look forward to meeting again the hundreds of workers and others who helped beat back the government—from meat packers in the Midwest, like those on strike against Tyson Foods in Wisconsin now, to garment workers who carried out a successful strike against Point Blank near Miami and are pressing ahead their fight for a union and a contract. I want to find out from them where they are at with their struggles and what I can do to help. I intend to describe this victory for what it is: a weapon that others can use to press for their rights in the United States and around the world.”

victory for the Cuban Revolution in the face of the empire’s hostile policy,” said the Cuban government in a statement released the same day.

In mid-April, the U.S. government unsuccessfully tried to push through an amended resolution at the UN commission that voiced “deep concern” about the “recent detention, summary prosecution, and harsh sentencing of numerous members of the political opposition” and called for their release. Instead, a weaker resolution was passed, asking Havana to allow a UN “monitor”—a French judge—to visit the island and report on human rights conditions. The Cuban government, maintaining a stance it has consistently taken, said it would not allow such a visit by a foreign “monitor.”

Washington has also intervened in the UN Human Rights Commission to selectively target other governments that have not gone along with the U.S. rulers’ prerogatives, such as Libya. White House spokesman Ari Fleischer said the UN commission “cannot expect to have Libya be its chair, to re-elect Cuba, and not have people wonder if they really do stand for human rights or not.”

The U.S. government has had problems of its own in the UN Human Rights Commission. In 2001 Washington, which had served on the commission for the past 50 years, lost its seat on that body. It won it back last year.

Cuban patriots in U.S. prisons write about fight to release them from ‘hole’

Printed below are excerpts from letters by Gerardo Hernández, Ramón Labañino, Fernando González, and René González four of five Cuban revolutionaries serving draconian sentences in U.S. prisons on frame-up charges brought by the U.S. government. The fifth is Antonio Guerrero. The Cuban Five, as they are known, were carrying out an internationalist mission to gather information on ultrarightist organizations with a record of violent attacks on Cuba carried out from U.S. soil with Washington’s complicity. They were arrested by FBI agents in 1998. Each was charged with “conspiracy to commit espionage” and “conspiracy to act as an unregistered foreign agent.” Hernández was also charged with “conspiracy to commit murder.” They were convicted in a federal court in Miami in June 2001, given sentences from 15 years in prison to a double life term, and locked up in five federal prisons spread out across the country.

On February 28 the five men were thrown into solitary confinement—“the hole”—after an order by the Justice Department charging that the extensive solidarity they had received in the form of correspondence and the few visitors they were allowed made them a “national security risk.” An international campaign of protests was launched against this unsuccessful attempt by Washington to break them. They were released from the hole a month later. The translation of the letters from Spanish is by the *Militant*.



Gerardo Hernández

First of all, many thanks! If today we’re out of “the hole,” we owe it to the solidar-



ity of many *compañeros* who united their efforts to denounce the injustice that was being committed. As always, support from the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* was there. For that reason, I would like your help in expressing our gratitude to all our brothers and sisters, and to reiterate how proud we are to be able to count on *compañeros* like you. We also send our sincere greetings for May 1, International Workers Day, and reaffirm our support and solidarity toward *compañero* Róger Calero.

I can tell you that during the month I was in the hole, they did not give me even a single letter. A few days afterward, they gave me a large amount of accumulated mail, including a number of items that you kindly sent me: *Granma*, the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*.

At the present time they are delivering mail to me with a delay of several days. But there doesn’t appear to be any additional limitation. For that reason, I’d like to continue receiving the same materials, which bring us a ray of light in the midst of the ever-growing darkness of disinformation in the big media.

Gerardo Hernández
U.S. Penitentiary
Lompoc, California

Ramón Labañino

We are deeply and eternally grateful for the beautiful and powerful support of all our brothers and sisters and of all human beings of good will who, with speed and firmness, protested the cruel and pitiless injustice of throwing the five of us into the

“hole,” at a crucial moment for our legal cases, when our appeal was to be heard before the 11th Circuit Court of Atlanta on April 7. But solidarity, firmness, brotherhood, and truth won out, and the U.S. government was forced, within 30 days, to pull back from the atrocity they wanted to subject us to for years.

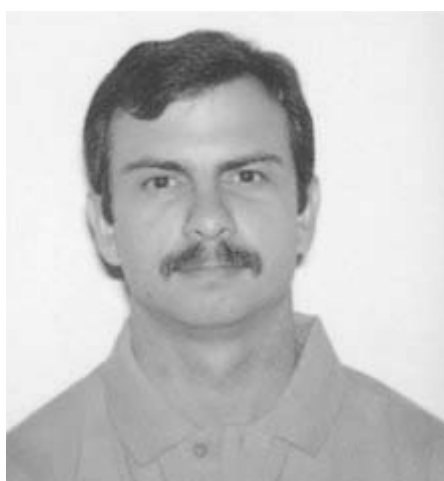
Thanks to each and every one of you, we’re back in the general population. And thanks to this beautiful effort, the day is getting nearer when we will see freedom; of that we have no doubt. Counting on your support makes us proud to defend you in this special trench, to defend the right to life, peace, and love among our peoples; and little by little to build the better world that humanity deserves and needs. Counting on your support also makes us certain of the final victory.



Ramón Labañino
U.S. Penitentiary
Beaumont, Texas

Fernando González

As to the hole, this was an act of political repression. The government fears the



truth, and it’s worried about the solidarity we’re receiving and the growing strength of the political campaign for our release. Nevertheless, through their arbitrary and unjust act, what they did was to strengthen that solidarity.

I’m grateful to the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial* for the support in making known our conditions of isolation, and for their solidarity.

A few months ago, I received the book *Marx and Engels on the United States* and I found it very interesting. I was also recently sent *Labor’s Giant Step* by Art Preis, which I’m sure will make instructive reading. I really know very little about the history of trade unionism in the United States. As you know, that subject is not included in most books about this country’s history.

I’ve had no difficulty in regularly receiving both the *Militant* and *Perspectiva Mundial*, as well as *Granma Internacional*. I’m sincerely grateful for the effort you’re making in providing us with these and other publications.

I hope you’re completely settled in your new offices.

Fernando González
Federal Corrections Institution
Oxford, Wisconsin

René González

I too felt great relief when they went to get me out of the hole. I’m getting back to my routine and I am recovering lost time. All of this thanks to the solidarity of people like you who gave us their support at that juncture.

I should tell you that since they lifted the sanction, mail delivery has been normalized, and I’m regularly receiving *Granma Internacional*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, the *Militant*, and *Cuba Socialista*. Shortly before I was confined, I received *Marianas in Combat* and *Malcolm X Talks to Young People*—in both English and Spanish. I read the first one, which I found extremely enjoyable. The second one is waiting in line after I finish the magnificent biography of Nelson Mandela that I’m reading at the present time, courtesy of some friend whose identity I’ve been unable to discover. Through your newspapers, I’m kept up to date on the titles Pathfinder publishes, so from time to time I will continue requesting one or another of your magnificent books.

René González Schwerert
Federal Corrections Institution
Edgefield, South Carolina



‘The conflict between U.S. imperialism and Cuba remains central to world politics’ Pathfinder Press president speaks at Sarah Lawrence College in N.Y.

BY MARTÍN KOPPEL

BRONXVILLE, New York—“The conflict between U.S. imperialism and Cuba remains central to world politics as it has been for almost half a century,” said Mary-Alice Waters, addressing students at a May 1 seminar at Sarah Lawrence College.

That might seem strange, she said, because Cuba is a relatively small country, in no conceivable way an economic or military “threat” to the Yankee colossus. But the reason is simple. “It’s because of Cuba’s socialist revolution and its example,” Waters said.

“Washington will never—can never—forgive the Cuban people, who today are celebrating and continuing to defend their socialist course. That course began more than 40 years ago by taking billions of dollars worth of land and factories away from the wealthy ruling families of the United States and their Cuban counterparts, establishing a new ruling class—the working class—and a new social order. Productive property is no longer privately owned and economic and social priorities are decided on the basis of meeting the needs of the majority, of working people, including aid to those who are fighting for national liberation and socialism in other parts of the world. Social solidarity, not the dog-eat-dog reality of capitalism, increasingly became the hallmark of social relations in this new Cuba.”

That is why, she emphasized, the U.S. rulers have carried out a relentless drive for the past 44 years to overthrow the Cuban Revolution. The current threats and provocations against Cuba are but one more piece of that history.

Waters, president of Pathfinder Press and editor of the Marxist magazine *New International*, had been invited to speak at a seminar that was part of a course on the Cuban Revolution, taught by history professor Matilde Zimmermann. She was introduced by María Elena García, a professor of Latin American anthropology. Some 20 students from the two classes attended the presentation and joined in the hour-long discussion that followed.

Students taking the course had read a number of books, ranging from *Conflicting Missions: Havana, Washington, and Africa, 1959-1976*, by Piero Gleijeses, to *Sex and Revolution: Women in Socialist Cuba*, by Lois Smith and Alfred Padula. Among them were Pathfinder titles, including several edited by Waters such as *Episodes of the Cuban Revolutionary War* by Ernesto Che Guevara; *Che Guevara Speaks: Making History: Interviews with Four Generals of Cuba’s Revolutionary Armed Forces*; and *October 1962: The ‘Missile’ Crisis as Seen from Cuba*, by Tomás Diez Acosta, as well as the section titled “Renewal or Death: Cuba’s Rectification Process,” contained in issue no. 6 of *New International*.

The topic Waters was asked to speak on was “Cuba in the world in the 1980s and ‘90s: From the ‘Three Giants’ to the Special Period.”

“It’s important to always begin with the fact that Cuba is part of the world,” Waters pointed out. “The fate of the Cuban Revolution has not and will not be decided solely or even primarily in Cuba. Victories and defeats of revolutions and struggles elsewhere weigh heavily in the balance.”

She described the impact that the victo-

ries of the popular revolutions in Grenada and Nicaragua in 1979 had in the world, and particularly in Cuba. “We’re no longer alone” was the cry of celebration. Cuban president Fidel Castro described the revolutions in Nicaragua, Grenada, and Cuba as “three giants rising up to defend their independence, sovereignty, and justice, on the very threshold of imperialism.”

Rectification process, Special Period

The revolutionary advances in Nicaragua and Grenada were a powerful boost to Cuban workers and farmers, Waters noted. “There was suddenly more oxygen in the air,” she said. Those victories, together with the revolutionary struggles advancing in southern Africa, were decisive in allowing the leadership of the Communist Party of Cuba in the mid-1980s to begin the political battle that became known as the rectification process.

“It was in fact a revolutionary renewal,” Waters stated, “a revitalization of the working-class methods of struggle, mass mobilization and voluntary labor, that are the heart and soul of any genuine popular revolution in the modern epoch.” Rectification was a political reorientation away from the economic and social planning policies modeled on those used in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe at the time, policies that benefited a privileged social layer of administrative personnel. Such policies, which had become predominant in Cuba from the early 1970s on, had led to increasing political demoralization and demobilization among working people, manifested in everything from declining morale and

Continued on Page 14

Fascism: What it is and how to fight it

Printed below are excerpts from *Fascism: What It Is and How to Fight It*, a pamphlet by Leon Trotsky published by Pathfinder Press.

Trotsky was a leader of the Bolshevik party and the October 1917 Russian Revolution. After V.I. Lenin, the central leader of the Bolshevik Party and the Russian Revolution, died in 1924, Trotsky became the principal leader of the fight to defend Lenin's revolutionary course against the anti-working class policies and actions of the growing petty-bourgeois caste whose most prominent spokesperson was Joseph Stalin. He was expelled from the Soviet Union in 1929 and was assassinated in Mexico in 1940 by an agent of Stalin's secret police.

In the years he wrote the selections in this pamphlet, Trotsky lived first in France and then in Norway, before being deported by the capitalist governments of those countries. Writing in the heat of struggle against the rising fascist movements in Europe in the 1930s, Trotsky examined the origin and nature of fascism and advanced a working-class strategy to combat it. The pamphlet is copyright © 1996 by Pathfinder Press. The following selection is reprinted by permission. Subheadings are by the *Militant*.



BY LEON TROTSKY

What is fascism? The name originated in Italy. Were all the forms of counterrevolutionary dictatorship fascist or not (that is to say, prior to the advent of fascism in Italy)?

The former dictatorship in Spain of Primo de Rivera, 1923–30, is called a fascist dictatorship by the Comintern.¹ We believe that is incorrect.

The fascist movement in Italy was a spontaneous movement of large masses, with new leaders from the rank and file. It is a plebeian movement in origin, directed and financed by big capitalist powers. It issued forth from the petty bourgeoisie, the slum proletariat, and even to a certain extent from the proletarian masses; Mussolini, a former socialist, is a “self-made” man arising from this movement.

Primo de Rivera was an aristocrat. He occupied a high military and bureaucratic post and was chief governor of Catalonia. He accomplished his overthrow with the aid of state and military forces. The dictatorships of Spain and Italy are two totally different forms of dictatorship. It is necessary to distinguish between them. Mussolini had difficulty in reconciling many old military institutions with the fascist militia. This problem did not exist for Primo de Rivera.

The movement in Germany is analogous mostly to the Italian. It is a mass movement, with its leaders employing a great deal of socialist demagoguery. This is necessary for the creation of the mass movement....

How Mussolini triumphed

At the moment that the “normal” police and military resources of the bourgeois dic-

tatorship, together with their parliamentary screens, no longer suffice to hold society in a state of equilibrium the turn of the fascist regime arrives.² Through the fascist agency, capitalism sets in motion the masses of the crazed petty bourgeoisie and the bands of declassed and demoralized lumpenproletariat all the countless human beings whom finance capital itself has brought to desperation and frenzy.

From fascism the bourgeoisie demands and thorough job; once it has resorted to methods of civil war, it insists on having peace for a period of years. And the fascist agency, by utilizing the petty bourgeoisie as a battering ram, by overwhelming all obstacles in its path, does a thorough job. After fascism is victorious, finance capital directly and immediately gathers into its hands, as in a vise of steel, all the organs and institutions of sovereignty, the executive, administrative, and educational powers of the state: the entire state apparatus together with the army, the municipalities, the universities, the schools, the press, the trade unions, and the cooperatives. When a state turns fascist, it does no mean only that the forms and methods of government are changed in accordance with the patterns set by Mussolini the changes in this sphere ultimately play a minor role but it means first of all for the most part that the workers organizations are annihilated; and that a system of administration is created which penetrates deeply into the masses and which serves to frustrate the independent crystallization of the proletariat. Therein precisely is the gist of fascism....

Italian fascism was the immediate outgrowth of the betrayal by the reformists of the uprising of the Italian proletariat. From the time the [first world] war ended, there was an upward trend in the revolutionary movement in Italy, and in September 1920 it resulted in the seizure of factories and industries by the workers. The dictatorship of the proletariat was an actual fact; all that was lacking was to organize it and to draw from it all the necessary conclusions. The social democracy took fright and sprang back. After its bold and heroic exertions, the proletariat was left facing the void. The disruption of the revolutionary movement became the most important factor in the growth of fascism. In September, the revolutionary advance came to a standstill; and November already witnessed the first major demonstration of the fascists (the seizure of Bologna).³

True, the proletariat, even after the September catastrophe, was capable of waging defensive battles. But the social democracy was concerned with only one thing: to withdraw the workers from combat at the cost of one concession after another. The social democracy hoped that the docile conduct of the workers would restore the “public opinion” of the bourgeoisie against the fascists. Moreover, the reformists even banked strongly upon the help of King Victor Emmanuel. To the last hour, they restrained the workers with might and main from giving battle to Mussolini's bands. It availed them



Nazi stormtroopers take over trade union offices in Berlin, Germany, 1933.

nothing. The crown, along with the upper crust of the bourgeoisie, swung over to the side of fascism. Convinced at the last moment that fascism was not to be checked by obedience, the social democrats issued a call to the workers for a general strike. But their proclamation suffered a fiasco. The reformists had dampened the powder so long, in their fear lest it should explode, that when they finally with a trembling hand did apply a burning fuse to it, the powder did not catch.

Two years after its inception, fascism was in power....

The perspective in the United States

The backwardness of the United States working class is only a relative term.⁴ In many very important respects it is the most progressive working class in the world, technically and in its standard of living....

The American workers are very combative as we have seen during the strikes. They have had the most rebellious strikes in the world. What the American workers misses is a spirit of generalization, or analysis, of his class position in society as a whole. This lack of social thinking has its origin in the country's whole history....

About fascism. In all the countries where fascism became victorious, we had, before the growth of fascism and its victory, a wave of radicalism of the masses of the workers and the poorer peasants and farmers, and of the petty bourgeois class. In Italy, after the war and before 1922, we had a revolutionary wave of tremendous dimensions; the state was paralyzed, the police did not exist, the trade unions could do anything they wanted but there was no party capable of taking power. As a reaction came fascism.

In Germany the same. We had a revolutionary situation in 1918; the bourgeois class did not even ask to participate in the power. The social democrats paralyzed the revolution. Then the workers tried again in 1922–23–24. This was the time of the bankruptcy of the Communist Party.... Then in 1929–30–31 the German workers began again a new revolutionary wave. There was a tremendous power in the Communists and in the trade unions, but then came the famous policy (on the part of the Stalinist movement) of social fascism, a policy invented to paralyze the working class. Only after these three tremendous waves did fascism become a big movement. There are no exceptions to this rule fascism comes only when the working class shows complete incapacity to take action into its own hands the fate of society.

In the United States you will have the same thing. Already there are fascist elements, and they have, of course, the examples of Italy and Germany. They will, therefore, work in a more rapid tempo. But you also have the examples of other countries. The next historic wave in the United States will be a wave of radicalism of the masses, not fascism. Of course the war can hinder the radicalization for some time, but then it will give to the radicalization a more tremendous tempo and swing.

We must not identify war dictatorship, the dictatorship of the military machine, of the staff, of finance capital with a fascist dictatorship. For the latter, there is first necessary a feeling of desperation of large masses of the people. When the revolutionary parties betray them, when the vanguard of workers shows its incapacity to lead the

people to victory then the farmers, the small business men, the unemployed, the soldiers, etc., become capable of supporting a fascist movement, but only then....

We may set it down as a historical law: fascism was able to conquer only in those countries where the conservative labor parties prevented the proletariat from utilizing the revolutionary situation and seizing power....

It is quite self-evident that the radicalization of the working class in the United States has passed through only its initial phases, almost exclusively in the sphere of the trade union movement (the CIO).⁵ The prewar period, and then the war itself, may temporarily interrupt this process of radicalization, especially if a considerable number of workers are absorbed into the war industry. But this interruption of the process of radicalization cannot be of long duration. The second stage of radicalization will assume a more sharply expressive character. The problem of forming an independent labor party will be put on the order of the day. Our transitional demands will gain great popularity. On the other hand, the fascist, reactionary tendencies will withdraw to the background, assuming a defensive position, awaiting a more favorable moment. This is the nearest perspective. No occupation is more completely unworthy than that of speculating whether or not we shall succeed in creating a powerful revolutionary party. Ahead lies a favorable perspective, providing all the justification for revolutionary activism. It is necessary to utilize the opportunities which are opening up to build the revolutionary party.

¹ The Comintern, or Communist International, was the world organization of the communist movement founded in 1919 as a revolutionary alternative to the class-collaborationist Socialist (Second) International. By the mid-1920s, however, it had become dominated by a ruling petty-bourgeois caste in the Soviet union that subordinated the interests of the world working-class to defense of its own perks and privileges.

² From “What Next? Vital Questions for the German Proletariat,” Jan. 27, 1932. The entire article is contained in *The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany* by Leon Trotsky.

³ The fascist campaign of violence began in Bologna, Nov. 21, 1920. When the social democratic councilmen, victorious in the municipal elections, emerged from city hall to present the new mayor, they were fired on by fascists. Ten people were killed and a hundred wounded. The fascists followed up with “punitive expeditions” into the surrounding countryside. Black-shirt “action squadrons,” in vehicles supplied by big landowners, took over villages in lightning raids, beating and killing peasant and labor leaders, wrecking the offices of working-class and peasant organizations, and terrorizing the people. Emboldened by their easy successes, the fascists then launched large-scale attacks in the big cities.

⁴ From “Some Questions on American Problems.” For the entire article see *Writings of Leon Trotsky, 1939-40* published by Pathfinder Press.

⁵ A series of explosive labor battles in the early 1930s in the United States forged industry-wide trade unions. Until then, most labor unions had been organized along narrow, craft lines into the American Federation of Labor (AFL). The Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) was the federation of industrial unions. The two federations merged in 1955.

From Pathfinder Writings by Leon Trotsky on fascism

Leon Trotsky on France

An assessment of the social and economic crisis that shook France in the mid-1930s in the aftermath of Hitler's rise to power in Germany, and a program to unite the working class and exploited peasantry to confront it. **\$24.95**

The Struggle Against Fascism in Germany

Writing in the heat of struggle against the rising Nazi movement, a central leader of the Russian revolution examines the class roots of fascism and advances a revolutionary strategy to combat it. **\$30.95**

Fascism: What it is and how to fight it

Trotsky examines the origins and nature of fascism and presents for the first time, a working-class strategy to combat and defeat it. **\$4.00**

Order from www.pathfinderpress.com. Please include \$3 for shipping and handling. Also available from bookstores, including those listed on page 12.

Birmingham 1963: ‘one of humanity’s great battles’

BY SAM MANUEL

Some 120 people marched in Birmingham, Alabama, May 4 to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the “Battle of Birmingham.” Around 80 members of the United Auto Workers union participated in a church service before the march.

The Battle of Birmingham was a month-long wave of protests in 1963 that became one of the pivotal episodes in the struggle to overthrow the system of Jim Crow segregation in the southern United States. The outcome registered one of the most sweeping victories for that movement, forcing the barons of business and industry in this industrial city to sign an agreement for the rapid desegregation of public facilities and the hiring and promotion of Blacks in jobs from which they had been long excluded. The victory in Birmingham gave momentum to the civil rights movement going into the hard-fought battles in Mississippi and other states, which eventually forced the federal government to pass the Civil Rights Act in 1964 and the Voting Rights Act the next year.

The state of Alabama and the city of Birmingham had been among the long-term strongholds of racist reaction. When a federal court ordered desegregation in public parks, city authorities closed down the parks rather than comply with the ruling. Alabama authorities had declared the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People—the main civil rights organization at the time—a “foreign corporation,” rendering its activities illegal. The Democratic States Rights Party, a collection of southern segregationists who walked out of the 1948 Democratic convention in protest of a pro-civil rights plank, held its founding convention in Birmingham.

Like most southern cities at the time, Birmingham was run by an all-white set of city commissioners. They were put in office through elections in which Blacks had limited, if any, franchise. Of the 80,000 registered voters in Birmingham in 1963 only 10,000 were Black. Among the city fathers was the infamous Eugene “Bull” Connor, Birmingham’s Commissioner for Public Safety, who took pride in knowing how to “handle niggers” and “keep them in their place.” Connor once ordered the arrest of a U.S. Senator, who was visiting the city to deliver a speech, because he walked through an entrance marked “Colored.”

Connor would fill Birmingham’s jails with civil rights marchers. At the height of the battle an estimated 2,400 Blacks and their supporters had been jailed. On May 2, 1963, school children throughout the city left school and began to gather in a city park. By the end of the day nearly 1,000 youth ages six to eighteen were in jail. Having run out of police wagons, Connor ironically used school buses to transport the youth to jail. With the jails overflowing, hundreds were held at the county fairgrounds. When no more could be taken to prison, Connor ordered his thugs to use police dogs and high-powered water hoses on protesters.

Segregationist power was maintained with the most base acts of terror. From 1957 to the opening of the campaign to desegregate Birmingham, 17 bombings of homes and churches of Blacks remained unsolved—leading many to dub the city “Bombingham.”

The federal government did little to protect Blacks against this violence and most often turned a blind eye. At the onset of the desegregation battle the administration of President John F. Kennedy claimed it had no authority to intervene in Birmingham. Attorney General Robert Kennedy, whose office was responsible to provide protection for civil rights workers in the south, was among the first to criticize the Birmingham campaign, saying it had “bad timing.”

Unlike many cities in the South, Birmingham was a center of heavy industry with large steel plants and coal mines. In the 1960s it had the country’s highest percentage of factory workers. Most of the workers in these industries were Black, including 60 percent of the workforce in the coal mines

and steel mills. These workers played an important role in the civil rights organizations that led the Battle of Birmingham.

As part of bringing history into the present, the *Militant* is reprinting below excerpts from an article by Fred Halstead, which was published in the May 13, 1963, issue of the paper on this battle. Halstead was a leader of the Socialist Workers Party. He helped lead the party’s work in the civil rights movement. He is also the author of *Out Now! A Participants Account of the Movement in the United States against the Vietnam War*, published by Pathfinder Press.

BY FRED HALSTEAD

MAY 8, 1963—One of humanity’s great battles is taking place in Birmingham, Alabama. Five weeks ago, for the first time in the history of the South’s steel city, Negroes there began exercising the right of peaceful protest against segregation by means of picket lines, sit-ins and marches. For five weeks the city officials of Birmingham—utilizing mass arrests, fire hoses and dogs—have shown the world that the elementary civil liberties such as free speech and assembly do not exist for Negroes in Birmingham.

Meanwhile the Kennedy administration persists in the ridiculous claim that the federal government doesn’t have the right to intervene in Birmingham because no federal court order is being violated.

Kennedy’s subterfuge is no longer being accepted by even the more conservative Negro leaders. The mass movement in Birmingham, and the picture of Negroes



Six-year-old waits to be arrested by the Birmingham police during protests in 1963

being bitten by police dogs, knocked down by fire hoses and arrested by the thousands for simply attempting to demonstrate peacefully for their rights, has unified the Negro community as never before behind the demand for federal intervention with troops in Birmingham.

The current wave of mass demonstrations began May 2 when some 700 young persons were arrested while walking in groups toward downtown Birmingham. The next day fire hoses and dogs were used against the demonstrators. At the very time this was taking place, Attorney General Robert Kennedy released a statement opposing, not the criminal and brutal acts of the Birmingham police, but the “timing” of the Negroes’ demonstrations.

The mass movement then proceeded to develop momentum. By Sunday, May 5, over 1,100 had been arrested. On May 6, large numbers of Negro school children stayed out of school to demonstrate. Some 1,000 were arrested. Comedian Dick Gregory, who led the first wave, was also jailed. On May 7, some three thousand persons,

including many teenagers, infiltrated past the police cordon and demonstrated in downtown Birmingham. Police made very few arrests—the jails already being overfull with some 2,400 demonstrators—but used special high-pressure hoses against the demonstrators.

The intransigence of sections of the Negro leadership and the involvement of ever greater numbers of the Negro population in this heavily working-class city has brought a mass movement of unprecedented power into existence. And this in the Jim Crow capital of U.S. big cities. So far, the new mass movement has refused to subordinate to Washington’s policy. This has assured its success and has put every individual and organization in the country which is concerned with civil rights on the spot.

Due partly to a new mood among the Negro masses and partly to the nature of Birmingham itself—a large industrial city—the new mass movement has a logic of development which could transform the whole struggle for equal rights for Negroes in this country.

Western Sahara independence fighter will tour New Zealand and Australia

BY ANNALUCIA VERMUNT

CHRISTCHURCH, New Zealand—Fatima Mahfoud, a representative of Polisario, the Western Sahara national liberation organization, will do a five-city speaking tour here May 21–30. Mahfoud is also a leader of the Saharawi National Women’s Union (SNWU). She will speak at university campuses and public forums, and meet with women’s groups and other organizations. Her New Zealand visit, which will be followed by a three-week tour of Australia, will provide a unique opportunity for working people and youth in this part of the world to learn firsthand about the independence struggle in Western Sahara.

Western Sahara is a nation of approximately 300,000 people in northwestern Africa. From 1884 to 1975 it was a direct colony of Spain. In face of growing independence struggles, the imperialist government of Spain and the semicolonial regimes of Morocco and Mauritania brokered a deal in 1975. Madrid relinquished direct control of Western Sahara and allowed it to be carved up and occupied by Moroccan and Mauritanian government forces.

Tens of thousands of Saharawis were driven from their country into the desert, where they have lived for almost three decades in tents in refugee camps on the Algerian side of the border. The imperialist rulers of the United States, France, and Spain continue to dominate Morocco through their client, King Mohammed VI.

The Saharawi people have been fighting for their independence for decades. In 1973, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Río de Oro (Polisario) was founded. It launched a guerrilla war for independence against Spain. Polisario continued its struggle after the 1975 agreement and drove out the Mauritanian forces four years later. The Moroccan regime, however, extended its occupation into the formerly Mauritania-controlled region.

Since 1989 the Polisario Front and the Moroccan regime have adhered to a United Nations-brokered cease-fire. Under this

agreement, the Saharawi people were supposed to vote in a referendum on independence. But for 12 years Morocco has obstructed the referendum.

The start of Mahfoud’s tour in New Zealand will coincide with the release of a report by United Nations Secretary General Kofi Annan, scheduled to be presented to the UN Security Council May 19. This report is meant to assess options for resolving the conflict in Western Sahara.

Mahfoud was invited to visit Australia and New Zealand by the Australian Western Sahara Association. In New Zealand, her tour is being organized by local committees involving university professors, student groups, and representatives of other organizations. These include the aid agency CORSO, Women’s International League for Peace and Freedom, immigrant groups, the Communist League, and Young Socialists.

Mahfoud, 33, has worked in a number of countries in Western Europe in recent years as a representative of Polisario and the SNWU. She will speak in Auckland, Hamilton, Christchurch, Dunedin, and Wellington.

Mariam Salec, a member of the national secretariat of SNWU, had made an initial contact with Young Socialists from New Zealand, and discussed the activities of this women’s group with YS members at the 16th World Festival of Youth and Students in Algiers in August 2001.



Fatima Mahfoud of Polisario, Western Sahara national liberation organization, will tour New Zealand and Australia in May.

“The Saharawi National Women’s Union was created during the struggle against Spanish colonialism,” Salec said in that interview. “It called for women’s rights and decolonization. After the withdrawal of Spain, it became an instrument for women to support the just struggle of our people against the invasion of Morocco. We are fighting not only to free our land but also for justice and equality. No one can speak about the Saharawi struggle and Saharawi liberation without speaking about the proud role that women play in our society.”

“Our women are fighting on two fronts. The first is to have a free and independent state. Without a state we can do nothing. Secondly, we are the motor force in the struggle to change the view that men have of women, and to get women to play their full role in our society.”

For more information call (3) 377-3834 or write to annalucia@chn.quik.co.nz

U.S. troops kill protesters in Falluja, Iraq

Continued from front page

a reserve Marines unit are training Iraqi cops in Hilla, 80 miles south of Baghdad.

An example of what “peace enforcement” has meant was an April 28 incident in Falluja, northwest of the capital. U.S. troops from the 82nd Airborne Division, who had taken over the Al-Ka’at elementary and high school in that town, fired on a crowd of about 200 protesters demanding the troops leave the school. The shooting left 13 people dead. U.S. spokespeople claimed they had returned fire from the crowd, but witnesses told reporters that the protesters, mostly young boys and teenagers, were unarmed.

“This is nothing but terrorism,” said Raaed, a witness who told reporters his brother Valid was killed. “The Americans used night-vision, laser pointers, and explosive bullets to kill innocent people.”

In Baghdad on April 25, 1st Lt. Eric Canaday of Delta Squadron’s 10th Engineer Corps led a group of soldiers in punishing four Iraqi men accused of looting. After seizing the men, they stripped them of their clothes at gunpoint, used a marker to scrawl the Arabic words for “dirty thief” on their chests, and paraded them before a jeering crowd.

“This is a disgusting way to treat people without trying them,” said Adil Al-Harni, demonstrating outside Baghdad’s Palestine Hotel. “If this is U.S. democracy, they can keep it.”

The unrest and protests against the U.S. occupation have been strongest in the south, home to many Shiite Muslims, who make up some 16 million of the country’s 24 million people. U.S. officials have claimed that Iranian agents are responsible for much of the widespread opposition there. Many Shiites identify with the example of the Iranian revolution, which toppled the brutal, imperialist-backed regime of the shah in 1979.

“We will take steps to suppress any threats to security and stability and that includes Iranian forces that don’t comply,” said Maj. Gen. William Webster, deputy commander of the U.S.-British ground forces in Iraq. “We are going to increase our focus on routes from Iran.”

In a widely publicized May 1 speech announcing an end to “major combat operations in Iraq,” U.S. president George Bush issued a not-so-veiled threat against Iran, as well as other governments targeted as an “axis of evil.” Speaking on board the USS *Abraham Lincoln* aircraft carrier as it steamed to California, he said, “Any outlaw regime that has ties to terrorist groups, and seeks or possesses weapons of mass destruction, is a grave danger to the civilized world, and will be confronted.”

The president pointedly described the assault on Iraq as a “battle” and “one victory in a war on terror that began on September 11, 2001, and still goes on.” He described the U.S. attack on Afghanistan as a previous “battle” in a longer-term war.

The previous day the U.S. State Department branded Iran “the most active state sponsor of terrorism during 2002” in a list that included north Korea, Libya, Syria, Iraq, the Sudan, and Cuba.

‘Challenge to non-proliferation’

In late April U.S. State Department official John Wolf claimed that “Iran provides perhaps the most fundamental challenge ever faced” by the backers of the 1970 Nuclear Non-Proliferation treaty. Tehran has stated that its nuclear program has no military purpose, and is aimed at meeting rapidly rising energy needs.

Iranian officials have also condemned the April 15 truce signed by U.S. officers with representatives of the People’s Mujahedeen, an Iranian opposition group that fields an Iraq-based force of some 15,000 combatants.

The deal allows the Mujahedeen, which had been backed by the Saddam Hussein regime, to keep its bases and its weapons, including tanks and artillery, on condition they are not used against U.S. troops. Writing from Tehran, Associated Press correspondent Ali Akbar Dareini reported that the pact allows the Mujahedeen “to use military force against what the United States says are Iranian infiltrators entering Iraq, such as the Badr Brigade.” The brigade is linked to the Iranian-based Supreme Council for Islamic Revolution in Iraq.

The People’s Mujahedeen, an exile-

based organization seeking to overthrow the Iranian government, emerged during the struggle against the shah. After the monarchy was toppled in the February 1979 popular insurrection, the Mujahedeen soon turned against the revolution.

They allied themselves with former president Abol Hassan Bani-Sadr and other bourgeois forces that, in the name of modernizing Iran and reducing the role of the Islamic clerics, sought to overthrow the government led by Ayatollah Khomeini. While presenting themselves as a “left” alternative, the group embarked on a campaign of sabotage and guerrilla attacks on Iranian government personnel and facilities.

Claiming the “right to fight the terrorist Iranian regime,” Pari Bakhshai, the commander of the organization’s Ashraf base in northern Iraq, about 60 miles from the Iranian border, asserted, “Our activities are absolutely independent of anything that happens in Iraq.” She did not comment on the U.S. military trucks driving through the Mujahedeen base at the time.

Although the U.S. government still labels the Mujahedeen a “terrorist” organization, the big-business media in this country is now trying to give the group a facelift, including playing up the fact that many of its fighters are women.

Organizing occupation regime

Meanwhile, the Pentagon-run Office of Reconstruction and Humanitarian Assistance has named a number of key officials in the occupation regime. The top four positions include two retired U.S. generals. In an effort to provide a civilian face, Paul Bremer, a former ambassador and current member of Bush’s Homeland Security Advisory Council, was picked to be in overall charge.

One million rally in Havana on May Day

BY MATILDE ZIMMERMANN

HAVANA—One million people attended the May Day rally in the Plaza de la Revolución here, according to local media estimates, with another half million or more turning out in cities around Cuba. By the time the sun came up, groups and families were streaming into the plaza from all directions for the 8:00 a.m. gathering. Buses left the suburbs at 4:00 a.m. or even earlier. Students gathered at the university after midnight for music and festivities, and started snake dancing through the streets down to the Plaza before dawn.

About 5:00 a.m. the skies opened, dumping several inches of rain on central Havana in just an hour. As I approached the plaza about 6:30 that morning, it was clearly a badge of honor to be soaking wet. A young elementary school teacher laughed off her drenched state. “What’s a little rain,” she asked, “when we are struggling for the future of our children and all the children of the world?”

A member of the Committees for the Defense of the Revolution—neighborhood groups that organize the population for security and other tasks—who was old enough to be the teacher’s grandfather, said he was there to show “that the people are united in the demand to bring the five patriots home.” He was referring to five Cuban revolutionaries imprisoned in U.S. jails on frame-up charges brought by the FBI, including conspiracy to commit espionage for Havana (see article on page 8).

¡Volverán! (they’ll be back) was a popular chant at the rally. A banner six stories high depicted the five Cuban patriots with the message: “We have the invincible strength of the revolution. They’ll be back!” Covering the side of another immense building was the banner: “The time has come for humanity to write its own history.”

The theme of this year’s May Day demonstration was “In Defense of Socialism.” Tens of thousands of red T-shirts bearing this slogan were distributed by the Central Organization of Cuban Workers (CTC) and the Union of Young Communists (UJC). I asked one CTC leader standing near me why I didn’t see banners and placards identifying workers by union or industry or raising particular demands. “We raise our demands and platforms in union meetings

Responsibilities for agriculture are to be taken on by Daniel Amstutz, a former chief executive of U.S. agribusiness monopoly Cargill.

Philip Carroll, former CEO of the U.S. branch of Shell Oil, was given a central role: to run Iraq’s oil industry.

“The key question in the Iraqi oil industry is whether it will remain in state hands...or be privatized,” stated an article in the *New York Times* on April 30, reporting an interview with Thamir Ghadhban, an Iraqi expatriate named to head the oil ministry. “Mr. Ghadhban said the path of privatization would not be alien to Iraq,” the article noted.

Jay Garner, the retired lieutenant general who has been heading the “civilian” side of the occupation to this point, has blamed the maintenance of United Nations Security Council sanctions for gasoline shortages in Iraq.

Oil production in Iraq has slumped to tens of thousands of barrels a day, a fraction of its prewar level. UN officials say the country is faced with having to import oil as a stop-gap.

France-U.S. conflict over sanctions

Since its military victory the Bush administration has pushed for lifting the UN “oil for food” program under which the sanctions are organized. The French government, which struck hundreds of construction and oil contracts with Baghdad under that program, has suggested that it be suspended instead.

The debate over how fast to lift sanctions is one front in the unfolding conflicts among the major imperialist powers—particularly Paris and Washington—over the extent of U.S. domination over Iraq.

In another maneuver, Washington has proposed the withdrawal of substantial

U.S. forces and their replacement by troops from a number of imperialist countries that were part of the “coalition of the willing”—backers of Washington in the war. U.S. officials have named the governments of Spain, Italy, Australia, Denmark, and the Netherlands as likely candidates. Under the blueprint announced May 2, the U.S. forces would maintain their grip on Baghdad, London would command a division in the south, near Basra, and troops from the Polish workers state would command a third division.

No reference has been made to the United Nations Security Council or to Berlin and Paris, both of which refused to endorse the U.S.-led invasion until it was under way.

The governments of the Philippines, Qatar, and South Korea are among those that have reportedly agreed to send some military personnel. U.S. officials say they expect contingents from the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, including Bulgaria and the Ukraine.

Poland and Bulgaria, along with Hungary and Rumania, will also be the destination for thousands of U.S. soldiers in a proposed reshuffle of the 112,000 U.S. troops in Europe. Already the Pentagon has announced that the 17,000 soldiers of the 1st Armored Division will not be returning to their former German home base.

The move east to countries along or near the Black Sea coast would bring the troops closer to likely theaters of imperialist intervention in the Middle East, Africa, and the Russian workers state. “Why do we need a joint force to be in Germany, where there’s nothing happening?” a senior military official told the *Los Angeles Times*. “You have to have troops close to ports and airfields that are closer to the action.”



Militant/Matilde Zimmerman

Demonstrators at the May Day rally in Havana called for release of five Cuban revolutionaries in U.S. prisons.

and congresses,” she explained. “Today is a time for coming together and reconfirming our commitment to the revolution. There are *compañeros* in my workplace who don’t agree with me on this or that issue, but we are all here today.”

The day before the demonstration, a worker I met at the CTC national headquarters told me that in Cuba May Day was not just a labor demonstration but a giant “festival of the people.”

Although the tone of the speeches was serious, the mood at the rally was festive. The police seemed concerned primarily with the logistics of bus parking. A flimsy unstaffed barricade kept an area clear in front of the speakers’ platform for emergency vehicles, and the enormous crowd entered and left the rally from all directions with no problems. It could not have been more different from the atmosphere at recent demonstrations in New York City against the war in Iraq, where our every move was controlled by thousands of heavily armed and sometimes brutal police.

“We don’t want Cuban and American blood to be spilled in a war,” Cuban president Fidel Castro told the rally. “But there has never been a people with more sacred things to defend or more profound principles to struggle for—a nation that

would rather be wiped off the face of the earth than give up the noble and generous accomplishments for which many generations of Cubans have paid a high cost in the lives of their best children.”

Fidel Castro’s 45-minute speech followed short greetings by international guests. He contrasted the foreign policy of Cuba with that of Washington, giving special emphasis to the aid Cuba has sent to defend national liberation struggles in Africa—from Algeria to Angola.

Castro also answered the plea that was part of the greetings brought by U.S. Pastors for Peace leader Lucius Walker asking that Cuba eliminate the death penalty. “The day will come,” Castro stated, “when we can comply.” Right now, he said, the choice was between “stopping cold” an ongoing wave of plane and boat hijackings thereby “protecting the lives of millions of Cubans by applying the death penalty law to the three main hijackers of a passenger ferry” (which the crowd applauded) or “standing with our arms crossed” (which was met with shouts of “No!”).

The rally ended with the singing of the Internationale. The experience of hearing the international communist anthem sung by a million people was not something I will quickly forget.

‘Knowledge ushers in your action program’

Printed below are excerpts from a speech given by Malcolm X June 28, 1964, at the first public rally of the Organization of Afro-American Unity (OAAU) at the Audubon Ballroom in New York. The full text of the speech is printed in *By Any Means Necessary*, one of Pathfinder’s Books of the Month for May. After breaking with the Nation of Islam, Malcolm founded the OAAU as a non-religious organization dedicated to the struggle by Afro-Americans for

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

“freedom by any means necessary.” Throughout the speech Malcolm quotes from the “Statement of Basic Aims and Objectives of the Organization of Afro-American Unity.” Copyright © by Pathfinder Press, reprinted by permission. Subheadings by the *Militant*.



BY MALCOLM X

When we send our children to school in this country they learn nothing about us other than that we used to be cotton pickers. Every little child going to school thinks his grandfather was a cotton picker. Why, your grandfather was Nat Turner; your grandfather was Toussaint L’Ouverture; your grandfather was Hannibal. Your grandfather was some of the greatest black people who walked on this earth. It was your grandfather’s hands who forged civilization and it was your grandmother’s hands who rocked the cradle of civilization.

But the textbooks tell our children nothing about the great contributions of Afro-Americans to the growth and development of this country....

A race of people is like an individual man; until it uses its own talent, takes pride in its own history, expresses its own culture, affirms its own selfhood, it can never fulfill itself.”

Our history and our culture were completely destroyed when we were forcibly brought to America in chains. And now it is important for us to know that our history did not begin with slavery. We came from Africa, a great continent, wherein live a proud and varied people, a land which is the new world and was the cradle of civilization. Our culture and our history are as old as man himself and yet we know almost nothing about it.

This is no accident. It is no accident that such a high state of culture existed in Africa and you and I know nothing about it. Why, the man knew that as long as you and I thought we were somebody, he could never treat us like we were nobody. So he had to invent a system that would strip us of everything about us that we could use to prove we were somebody. And once he had stripped us of all human—us of our language, stripped us of our history, stripped us of all cultural knowledge, and brought us down to the level of an animal—he then began to treat us like an animal, selling us from one plantation to another, selling us from one owner to another, breeding us like you breed cattle....

We must recapture our heritage and our identity if we are ever to liberate ourselves from the bonds of white supremacy. We must launch a cultural revolution to unbrainwash an entire people.

A cultural revolution. Why, brothers, that’s a crazy revolution. When you tell this black man in America who he is, where he came from, what he had when he was there, he’ll look around and ask himself, “Well, what happened to it, who took it away from us and how did they do it?” Why, brothers, you’ll have some action just like that. When you let the black man in America know where he once was and what he once had, why, he only needs to look at himself now to realize some-

thing criminal was done to him to bring him down to the low condition that he’s in today.

Once he realizes what was done, how it was done, where it was done, when it was done, and who did it, that knowledge in itself will usher in your action program. And it will be by any means necessary. A man doesn’t know how to act until he realizes what he’s acting against. And you don’t realize what you’re acting against until you realize what they did to you. Too many of you don’t know what they did to you, and this is what makes you so quick to want to forget and forgive...

When you have no knowledge of your history, you’re just another animal; in fact, you’re a Negro; something that’s nothing. The only black man on earth who is called a Negro is one who has no knowledge of his history. The only black man on earth who is called a Negro is one who doesn’t know where he came from. That’s the one in America. They don’t call Africans Negroes.

‘You become somebody’

Why, I had a white man tell me the other day, “He’s not a Negro.” Here the man was black as night, and the white man told me, “He’s not a Negro, he’s an African.” I said, “Well, listen to him.” I knew he wasn’t, but I wanted to pull old whitey out, you know. But it shows you that they know this. You are Negro because you don’t know who you are, you don’t know what you are, you don’t know where you are, and you don’t know how you got here. But as soon as you wake up and find out the positive answer to all these things, you cease being a Negro. You become somebody.



Robert Parent

Malcolm X speaking at the founding rally of the Organization of Afro-American Unity, June 28, 1964, at the Audubon Ballroom in Harlem, New York.

Armed with the knowledge of our past, we can with confidence charter a course for our future. Culture is an indispensable weapon in the freedom struggle. We must take hold of it and forge the future with the past.

And to quote a passage from *Then We Heard the Thunder* by John Killens, it says: “He was a dedicated patriot: Dignity was his country, Manhood was his government, and Freedom was his land.” Old John Killens.

This is our aim. It’s rough, we have to smooth it up some. But we’re not trying to put something together that’s smooth. We don’t care how rough it is. We don’t care how tough it is. We don’t care how backward it may sound. In essence it only means we want one thing. We declare our right on this earth to be a man, to be a human being, to be respected as a human being, to be given the rights of a human being in this society, on this earth, in this day, which we intend to bring into existence by any means necessary.

—IF YOU LIKE THIS PAPER, LOOK US UP—

Where to find Pathfinder books and distributors of the *Militant*, *Perspectiva Mundial*, *New International*, *Nouvelle Internationale*, *Nueva Internacional* and *Ny International*.

UNITED STATES

ALABAMA: Birmingham: 3029A Bessemer Road. Zip: 35208. Tel: (205) 780-0021. E-mail: bhmSWP@bigfoot.com

CALIFORNIA: Los Angeles: 4229 S. Central Ave. Zip: 90011. Tel: (323) 233-9372. E-mail: 74642.326@compuserve.com
San Francisco: 3926 Mission St. Zip: 94112. Tel: (415) 584-2135. E-mail: sfswp@hotmail.com

COLORADO: Craig: 6 West Victory Way. Zip: 81625. Mailing address: P.O. Box 1539. Zip: 81626. Tel: (970) 826-0289. E-mail: westerncoloradoswp@yahoo.com

FLORIDA: Miami: 8365 NE 2nd Ave. #206 Zip: 33138. Tel: (305) 751-7076. E-mail: miamiswp@bellsouth.net;
Tampa: 1441 E. Fletcher, Suite 421. Zip: 33612. Tel: (813) 910-8507. E-mail: TOC1004@aol.com

GEORGIA: Atlanta: 2791 Lakewood Ave. Zip: 30315. Mailing address: P.O. Box 162515. Zip 30321. Tel: (404) 763-2900. E-mail: atlpathfinder@cs.com

ILLINOIS: Chicago: 2901 W. 59th Street. Zip: 60629. Tel: (773) 737-1190. E-mail: ChicagoPathfinder@compuserve.com

IOWA: Des Moines: 3720 6th Ave. Zip: 50313. Tel: (515) 288-2970. E-mail: swpdesmoines@cs.com

MASSACHUSETTS: Boston: 12 Bennington St., 2nd Floor, East Boston. Mailing address: P.O. Box 261. Zip: 02128. Tel: (617) 569-9169. E-mail: 103426.3430@compuserve.com

MICHIGAN: Detroit: 4208 W. Vernor St. Mailing address: P.O. Box 44739. Zip: 48244-0739. Tel: (313) 554-0504.

E-mail: DetroitMISWP@netscape.net

MINNESOTA: St. Paul: 113 Bernard St., West St. Paul. Zip: 55118. Tel: (651) 644-6325. E-mail: tcswp@qwest.net

NEBRASKA: Omaha: P.O. Box 7005. Zip: 68107. E-mail: omahaoc@netscape.net

NEW JERSEY: Newark: 168 Bloomfield Avenue, 2nd Floor. Zip: 07104. Tel: (973) 481-0077. E-mail: swpn Newark@yahoo.com

NEW YORK: Manhattan: 545 8th Ave., 14th Floor. Mailing address: P.O. Box 30. Zip: 10018. Tel: (212) 695-7358. E-mail: swpnnygd@attglobal.net.

NORTH CAROLINA: Charlotte Area: 2001A N. Cannon Blvd. Kannapolis. Zip: 28083. Tel: (704) 932-0821. E-mail: charlotteswp@aol.com

OHIO: Cleveland: 11018 Lorain Ave. Zip: 44111. Tel: (216) 688-1190. E-mail: 103253.1111@compuserve.com

PENNSYLVANIA: Hazleton: 69 North Wyoming St. Zip: 18201. Tel: (570) 454-8320. Email: swpnepa@intergrafix.net
Philadelphia: 5237 N. 5th St. Zip: 19120. Tel: (215) 324-7020. E-mail: PhiladelphiaSWP@yahoo.com
Pittsburgh: 5907 Penn Ave. Suite 225. Zip: 15206. Tel: (412) 365-1090. E-mail: pghswp@bigzoo.net

TEXAS: Houston: 619 West 8th St. Zip: 77007. Tel: (713) 869-6550. E-mail: swphouston@evl.net

WASHINGTON, D.C.: 3437 14th St. NW Zip: 20010. Tel: (202) 387-1590. E-mail: dc-swp@starpower.net

WASHINGTON: Seattle: 5418 Rainier Avenue South. Zip: 98118-2439. Tel: (206) 323-1755. E-mail: swpseattle@qwest.net

AUSTRALIA

Sydney: 1st Flr, 3/281-287 Beamish St.,

Campsie, NSW 2194. Mailing address: P.O. Box 164, Campsie, NSW 2194. Tel: (02) 9718 9698. E-mail: cl_australia@bigpond.com

BRITAIN

London: 47 The Cut. Postal code: SE1 8LL. Tel: 020-7928-7993. E-mail: clondon@onetel.net.uk

CANADA

Montreal: 1237 Jean Talon E. Montréal, QC. Postal code: H2R 1W1. Tel: (514) 284-7369. E-mail: Librpath@sympatico.ca

Toronto: 2761 Dundas St. West, Postal code: M6P 1Y4. Tel: (416) 767-3705. E-mail: milpathtoronto@sympatico.ca

Vancouver: 2645 E. Hastings, Room 203. Postal code: V5V 1Z5. Tel: (604) 872-8343. E-mail: clvancouver@cs.com

FRANCE

Paris: P.O. 175, 23 rue Lecourbe. Postal code: 75015. Tel: (01) 47-26-58-21. E-mail: 73504.442@compuserve.com

ICELAND

Reykjavik: Skolavordustig 6B. Mailing address: P. Box 0233, IS 121 Reykjavik. Tel: 552 5502. E-mail: milpth@mmedia.is

NEW ZEALAND

Auckland: Suite 3, 7 Mason Ave., Otahuhu. Postal address: P.O. Box 3025. Tel: (9) 276-8885. E-mail: milpath.auckland@ac trix.gen.nz

Christchurch: Gloucester Arcade, 129 Gloucester St. Postal address: P.O. Box 13-969. Tel: (3) 365-6055. E-mail: pathfinder.militant@paradise.net.nz

SWEDEN

Stockholm: Domargränd 16, S-129 47, Hägersten. Tel: (08) 31 69 33. E-mail: pathfbkh@algonet.se

May

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

PATHFINDER READERS CLUB SPECIALS

25% DISCOUNT

Woman’s Evolution
From Matriarchal Clan to Patriarchal Family
Assesses women’s leading and still largely unknown contributions to the development of human civilization.
\$24.95. **Special price: \$18.75.**

Challenge of the Left Opposition (1928-29)
Leon Trotsky
Last of three-volume set.
\$29.95. **Special price: \$22.50**

By Any Means Necessary
Malcolm X
Speeches tracing the evolution of Malcolm X’s views on political alliances, women’s rights, capitalism and socialism, and more. \$15.95. **Special price: \$12.00.**

Black Music, White Business
Illuminating the History and Political Economy of Jazz
Frank Kofsky
\$15.95. **Special price: \$12.00.**

Join the Pathfinder Readers Club for \$10 and receive discounts all year long

ORDER ONLINE AT WWW.PATHFINDERPRESS.COM

New York unions rally against layoffs, cutbacks in services

Continued from front page
tion (CSEA), and the United Federation of Teachers.

Mayor Michael Bloomberg has already announced plans to lay off 5,400 city workers in a package of measures that particularly targets public education. The plan would also close a dozen children's clinics. Ten thousand more jobs will go, the mayor says, unless the city unions swallow another \$600 million in concessions and the state government approves a tax for "out-of-towners" who work in the city. The commuter tax rate would be nearly three percent, six times higher than that of a similar tax repealed in 1999.

The police estimated the crowd at 15,000. Organizers said that about double that number of protesters took part.

A group from AFSCME Local 420 carried some hand-made signs that read, "It's the rich guys' turn!" It was a reference to the feeling many workers expressed that the city's 13,000 millionaires will go untouched by the economic crisis. A tax cut proposed by Bloomberg is estimated to bring tens of thousands of dollars in tax savings for the wealthiest families in the city.

"Bush has messed everything up for the working man," said Marcus Hamilton, who lives in Harlem and has been a city maintenance worker for 10 years. "The Republicans are just for big business."

Blame Republicans

Placing the entire blame on the Republican party and the administration of U.S. president George Bush for the economic crisis and the rulers's attempts to use it to slash wages, benefits, worsen job conditions, and cutback on public services in order to safeguard their profit margins was a central theme presented from the speakers' platform. The only solution union officials who addressed the rally offered was implicit or outright support for the Democratic Party, which has been as responsible as the Republicans for the attacks on services, and workers wages and living standards in the city.

CSEA president Daniel Donohue, for example, told participants in the rally, "We've moved mayors into City Hall, and we're here to tell Bloomberg we can move him out of City Hall."

"He's gotten us into two wars already," Raglan George, head of AFSCME State Council 1707, told the rally, referring to

U.S. President George Bush. "Wars that should not have been fought," he said to cheers from the crowd. George said the money spent on the war should be used to keep city workers employed and fund services.

"We have been giving, giving and giving," said Nidia Saldano in an interview with the *Militant*. The 26-year old works at a daycare center in the Bronx. "The cost of everything is going up except our wages. I work at a day care center but can't afford it for my own kids. I have to depend on help from family members," she said. "That's not right," she added angrily.

"The mayor wants to be able to contract out more of the work we do to private companies," Roland Hodges explained. Hodges, who grew up in Trinidad, is a member of the union council's Local 375. "If we continue to allow this there won't be anything left of the union," he said. Hodges works as an engineer and maintains the city's traffic lights. When he started there were nearly 2,000 engineers. Only a few hundred remain now.

Several union officials aimed their fire at "contract workers." "They don't even live in the city," said AFSCME president Gerald



Militant/Róger Calero

Members of AFSCME District Council 37 rally outside New York's city hall April 29 to protest layoffs and cuts in city services the mayor has threatened to impose.

McEntee, addressing the rally.

Upon hearing this, Hodges disagreed that "contract workers" are the problem. "They make less than we do. It's the contractors who are getting the money," he said.

In addition to the \$600 million in concessions the mayor has sought from union officials he has also pushed for the state government to increase sales and income taxes which will hit working people the hardest.

At the end of the week Bloomberg and state assembly leaders announced they had reached an agreement for a three-year increase in the sales tax. The plan includes a small increase on annual incomes over \$100,000. Those individuals would pay and estimated \$32.50 in additional taxes.

The plan also includes a provision to protect the city's bondholders. Albany would back the refinancing of \$2.5 billion in debts from bonds issued in the 1970s.

Students protest victimization of U. Mass Africana Studies professor in Boston

BY TED LEONARD

BOSTON—Some 400 people filled Ryan Lounge at the University of Massachusetts Boston, (UMB) April 7 to protest the victimization of Africana Studies professor Anthony Van Der Meer. The students, staff, faculty, and community members heard a panel of speakers discuss the professor's arrest on charges of assaulting a campus police officer and resisting arrest. Dozens of witnesses say the incident leading to the charges was provoked by the cops and a U.S. military recruiter on campus. On April 3 U.S. National Guard representatives set up a recruitment table at a spot set aside for the distribution of literature. In the afternoon student Tony Naro, wearing a T-shirt reading, "Education, Not Enlistment," began passing out a flyer in the same area promoting a commemoration the next day of the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr. The

leaflet opposed the U.S. assault on Iraq.

Objecting to the content of the flyer, the recruiters summoned the campus police. Shortly after the cops arrived, Van Der Meer, a leader of the Black Solidarity Committee For World Peace and one of the organizers of the commemoration, stopped by.

After Naro complied with a police request to move to the side and distribute the flyer near a Black Student Center table, one of the National Guard recruiters told him, "You should be shot in the head."

When Van Der Meer objected to the threat he too was told he "should be shot in the head." The cops then tackled the teacher and handcuffed him, ripping his coat and knocking a lens out of his glasses. Meanwhile, the recruiter who had made the threats walked away.

Seeing the incident, students in the lobby began shouting, "Stop police brutality" and

"Recruiters off our campus." The cops took Van Der Meer to their office, chaining him to the wall, and then to Dorchester District Court where he was formally charged.

Students insisted that the campus cops take their names as witnesses. Later about 30 students attended the professor's arraignment in District Court.

"If anybody should have been arrested it should have been the guardsman," said Tony Naro at a press conference that evening.

The April 7 meeting featured a panel of students and representatives of the school's faculty and administration, along with Philip O'Donnell, a spokesman for the Campus Police, who said he was proud of his officers.

Vice Chancellor David MacKenzie said that the offending recruiter "will not be back on campus."

One speaker explained that the USA Patriot Act, enacted in 2001, requires that military recruiters be allowed on U.S. college campuses. Furthermore, he said, "High schools have to turn over the names of all students over 16 years old to recruiters."

"I don't think the problem is procedure," said Africana Studies professor Jemadari Kamara, commenting on a question about how the arrest was carried out. What was involved was racism on the campus and in society, he said. Many students expressed a similar view.

Van Der Meer will appear at the Dorchester District Courthouse on May 28. He described the fight as "winnable" when he spoke at an April 16 program opposing the Iraq war. "There is more involved than just myself," he said. "You cannot just have the military come on campus and shut us down."

Ted Leonard is a meat packing worker in the Boston area.

Washington is among world's leading executioners

BY RÓGER CALERO

The U.S. government is one of the top executioners in the world. The death penalty has been used against 848 people in the United States since the Supreme Court

reinstated it in 1976. Seventy-one people were executed in the United States last year alone—the third-highest number of executions in the world after China and Iran. So far this year, 28 people in this country

have been killed by lethal injection or the electric chair.

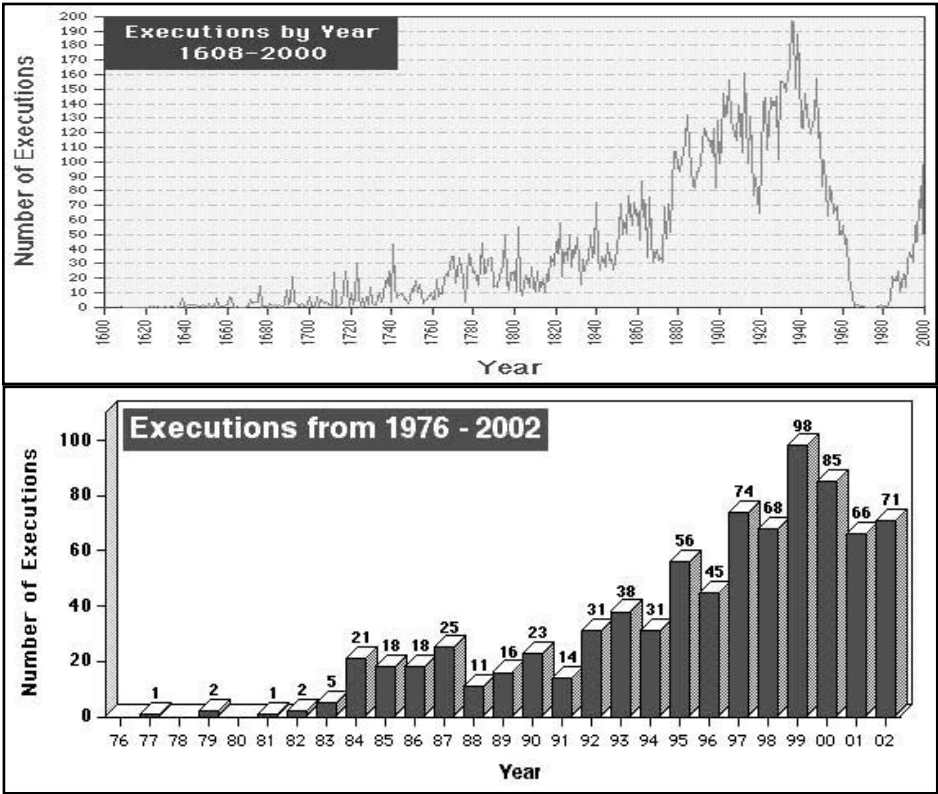
The United States also ranks first in the number of people on death row—more than 3,500 at present.

Execution of minors

This is one of the few countries in the world known to have executed minors since 1990. Until recently the United States was one of only six countries legally allowing the execution of mentally impaired persons—the U.S. Supreme Court ruled against this barbaric practice last June. Some 35 mentally impaired individuals have been executed since 1976, and another 200 to 300 sat on death row at the time of the court's ruling last year.

Capital punishment in the United States is used overwhelmingly against workers and farmers, particularly Blacks, who comprise 35 percent of the total number of executions and 43 percent of those on death row.

The use of the death penalty by the capitalist rulers grew rapidly as the United States became an imperialist power in the late 19th century. It peaked at a rate of nearly 200 in the mid-1930s—the period of the last major labor upsurge in the United States—and, after a period of decline in use and a suspension of executions between 1967 and 1976, the use of the death penalty has again risen sharply over the past quarter-decade.



Source: Death Penalty Information Center

An Action Program

To Confront the Coming Economic Crisis

How a program to fight for jobs and affirmative action, and to combat imperialism's pilage of the Third World, is crucial to uniting working people internationally. Also available in Spanish, French, Swedish, and Icelandic. \$3.00

Available www.pathfinderpress.com

A victory for all workers

Róger Calero and his defenders scored an outstanding victory when the U.S. government moved to end its deportation proceedings against him. Calero is right when he says this victory is “a weapon that others can use to press for their rights, in the United States and around the world.”

The federal government stated two reasons for dropping its case: “The notice to appear [at a deportation hearing] was improvidently issued” and “Circumstances of the case have changed after the notice was issued to such an extent that continuation is no longer in the best interest of the government.”

Webster’s defines “improvident” as “not foreseeing and providing for the future.” What did the Immigration and Naturalization Service “not foresee”? What “circumstances” changed since they grabbed the *Militant* staff writer and *Perspectiva Mundial* associate editor on December 3 at the Houston airport on his return from a reporting assignment in Latin America?

He and his defenders fought back, loudly and publicly—that’s what changed. And his fight won increasingly broad support. The case became an unexpected, and increasing, political liability for the government.

Why did Calero get such a broad hearing? Because the government attempt to “exclude” him from the United States, revoke his permanent residency, and deny him the right to live and work here struck a chord among many.

The immigration police, now the largest federal police agency, has stepped up its terror raids in workplaces. Over the past decade the number of deportable offenses, and the powers of federal cops to summarily detain and deport immigrants, have been expanded. In the name of “fighting terrorism” the U.S. government has rounded up hundreds, holding many indefinitely without charges.

As a result, hundreds of thousands of workers have faced victimization by the hated *migra*. At a time of continuing working-class resistance, an increasing number have refused to be intimidated and have stood up to fight.

Calero’s defense campaign is an example for others pressing their own battles against deportation, frame-ups, or other attacks by the police. It shows it is possible to stand up to the bosses and their cops. The defense campaign has been broad and nonpartisan, seeking support regardless of political views, on the principle of the labor movement that “an injury to one is an injury to all.”

Calero has won support from meat packers in the Midwest, garment workers in Florida fighting for a union, advocates of the rights of journalists, religious figures, defenders of immigrant workers, and many others. He has linked up with others facing frame-ups such as Palestinian activists Sami Al-Arian and Farouk Abdel-Muhti, Somali rights advocate Omar Jamal, and the five Cuban revolutionaries locked up in U.S. prisons on phony “conspiracy” charges.

The defense campaign is not over. Calero’s attorney is seeking the return of his green card and passport. The Róger Calero Defense Committee needs financial contributions right now to meet outstanding legal and publicity expenses.

Unionists, defenders of immigrant workers, and other supporters of civil liberties need to get out the maximum publicity about this fight, both to seal the victory and make it a weapon in the hands of other workers and fighters for justice.

Navy leaves Vieques

Continued from Page 4

by May 1, 2003. On April 30 the Navy turned over the more than 15,000 acres of land on the eastern part of the island that were still under its control to the U.S. Department of the Interior. That agency is now charged with turning this land, plus 3,100 acres on the western part of the island that had been returned previously, into a wildlife refuge.

Many of the local residents, however, oppose handing over the land to the U.S. Department of Interior. Only 4,375 acres has been turned over to the municipality—one-fifth of the previously occupied lands. Many in Vieques see this decision, in which they had no say, as a reaffirmation of the colonial status of Puerto Rico.

“Our demand is very clear: these lands are ours,” said Ismael Gualupe, a leader of the Committee for the Rescue and Development of Vieques. “We don’t recognize the right of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to administer them.”

“The Navy still holds the titles to the lands,” said Imac Morales, one of the hundreds of people who had been arrested during previous civil disobedience protests against the Navy.

“The importance of this action is to send a message to both the Navy and the Department of the Interior that this is our land, and that we don’t have to ask for permission from any body to enter it,” said one of the residents who participated in one of the May 1 boat landings.

Local community groups report that a local fisherman, found catching crabs in the restricted areas by federal agents, was fined \$25 per crab. In response, residents of the nearby Santa María neighborhood went en masse to the area and fished for three days in defiance of the U.S. authorities.

Calderón said it was “premature” to speak about returning the land to the residents. She insisted that it will be a “long and complex process that must be done in stages and that must not be forced artificially.”

Community organizations are demanding their active participation in all decisions related to the restoration and decontamination of the land in Vieques.

In a letter signed by different community organizations, they demanded the “complete and comprehensive environmental cleanup and restoration of all lands, coastal zones and other natural and cultural resources.” They are calling for the cleanup to be conducted with care for the future social and economic development of Vieques, such as “fishing, camping, hiking, kayaking, guided nature tours, other eco-tourism projects, agriculture, housing, and other social uses.”

Sarah Lawrence College

Continued from Page 8

productivity to increased cases of flagrant mismanagement and corruption.

Waters quoted Cuban president Fidel Castro’s observation that prior to launching the rectification process, Cuba had for a number of years been heading, not toward socialism or communism, but toward “a system worse than capitalism.” The construction of socialism is not “a question of mechanisms,” he said. “It is a political task, a revolutionary task.

She pointed to the voluntary labor “minibrigades” that became a social movement at the heart of the rectification process. Through such collective, voluntary efforts, for example, working people were able to begin to confront the shortage of child-care centers needed by working women. They built more than 110 such facilities in Havana within two years, in contrast to the two built in 1980-85. Thousands of apartments, medical facilities, schools, and other social priorities were built the same way.

The rectification process was gaining momentum when the Stalinist regimes in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe crumbled at the beginning of the 1990s. In a matter of months, Cuba lost

Two-week issue of ‘Militant’

This is a two-week issue of the *Militant*. Between May 7 and May 13 the paper will not publish so that the editorial staff can move into new offices in midtown Manhattan (see address on page 2). This is also the first issue of the paper to be produced on a new computer network, which will be made fully functional during the same period with help from supporters of the paper.

The next issue will be printed May 21.

the lion’s share of its trade—trade at preferential terms—and economic aid, and rectification ground to a halt in face of crushing shortages of basic products. The Cuban government was forced to organize a retreat, allowing the circulation and use of the dollar, promoting tourism and foreign investment on the island as ways to obtain the hard currency needed to meet the country’s priorities. A tightened U.S. trade embargo increased the difficulties.

Why did the Cuban Revolution not crumble, as many at the time predicted, Waters asked? Among the factors she pointed to was the prior strengthening of the revolution, the revolutionary confidence gained by Cuba’s working people, through the rectification process. In confronting the widening social inequalities, the undermining of social solidarity, and other challenges of the Special Period, the Cuban leadership has drawn on this strength.

Today in Cuba, the several-year-old campaign called the Battle of Ideas is based on the same revolutionary methods, mobilizing thousands of youth to transform the education system, “opening the universities to thousands of working-class youth who would otherwise be on the margins of society without real prospects for study and work,” she said.

Waters also talked about the latest U.S. government attacks and provocations against Cuba, and the imperialist propaganda campaign to brand Cuba as a repressive dictatorship because of the arrests, trials, and convictions of 75 opponents of the revolution a month ago. Also in early April, three men convicted as ringleaders of an armed hijacking of a ferry off the coast of Havana—one of a string of recent violent hijackings—were given the death penalty and summarily executed.

After the presentation, students asked questions ranging from topics such as the economic impact of the decline in tourism in Cuba over the past two years to the relation between the U.S.-led invasion of Iraq and Washington’s increased aggressiveness toward Cuba, changing attitudes in Cuba toward social questions such as women’s rights and affirmative action for Blacks and mestizos, and the case of the five Cuban revolutionaries framed up and imprisoned in the United States.

Many of the questions were on the events of the last month that Waters had referred to.

Discussion on recent trials in Cuba

During the discussion, Waters pointed out that in the recent trials 75 individuals were convicted not for expressing ideas, but for acts in collaboration with a hostile state power, Washington, in its campaign to overthrow the Cuban government. The so-called Helms-Burton law in 1996, she noted, makes the removal of Fidel Castro and Raúl Castro from the government a precondition for lifting the U.S. economic embargo against Cuba.

The trials and convictions, she said, can only be understood in the context of the unremitting efforts by Washington to overturn the revolution and reestablish capitalism in Cuba. The stepped-up provocations, openly organized through the U.S. Interests Section in Havana, include the funneling of millions of dollars, authorized under the Helms-Burton and similar laws, to finance the activities of these “dissidents.”

Likewise, she explained, the accelerating number of armed hijackings of Cuban planes and boats in recent months has been fostered by Washington’s policy of limiting visas to Cubans applying to immigrate to the United States while at the same time granting residency to any Cuban who arrives on U.S. shores, regardless of any crimes they may have committed to get there, and refusing to prosecute hijackers.

In response to a comment questioning the sentences, including the use of the death penalty against three of the ferry hijackers, Waters said that, under the circumstances, she supported the Cuban Council of State’s decision to go forward with the execution of the convicted hijackers.

Hijacking a plane or a boat endangers the lives of every single man, woman, and child on board, she noted. Taking decisive action to stop the acceleration of such actions was both necessary and widely supported in Cuba, Waters added. She called attention to Cuban president Fidel Castro’s recent TV address in which he noted that Cuba had effectively had a moratorium on executions in death penalty cases since the year 2000. (See Castro’s remarks on the death penalty to the Havana May Day rally in the article on page 11).

In response to another question, Waters said that the imperialist rulers are always probing ways to attack revolutionary Cuba, and Washington’s current propaganda campaign and threats of imposing new restrictions on travel and money sent to family members in Cuba is intended to prepare the ground for further measures to punish the Cuban people. Launching a military assault against the island is a totally different matter, however, because of the strength of the revolution, its military preparedness, and its mass popular character, Waters stated. “Every Cuban is trained and ready to take up arms,” she noted, and the U.S. rulers are aware that, unlike their invasion of Iraq, any assault on Cuba would lead to enormous U.S. casualties—casualties they cannot assume will be accepted by the American people. “That has stayed their hand for more than four decades.”

Students show interest in Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange

Following the May 1 class at Sarah Lawrence, students stayed around to continue the discussion and browse through Pathfinder literature. One remarked that she appreciated the quality of the Pathfinder books and pamphlets she had studied for the class. “Pathfinder is great—I like their glossaries and the indexes and photos,” said one student, “they helped me get more out of the readings.”

Among those attending the seminar were three young people from New York who are organizing to participate in the upcoming Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange, a visit to the island during the last week of July sponsored by Cuban youth organizations. They passed out literature on the Exchange and made a brief presentation to those attending the seminar. Several interested students met with them after the class to find out more about the trip, and decided to organize a meeting a week later to involve more students and student groups at Sarah Lawrence.

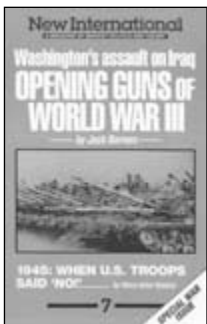
—M.K.

Third Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange July 24–July 31

Young people from across the United States will be traveling to Cuba in July to participate in the Third Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange. They will meet with youth in that country, exchange ideas with them, and see firsthand the truth about the socialist revolution. They will take part in the 50th anniversary celebration of the assault on Moncada, which launched the revolutionary war that brought down a U.S.-backed dictatorship. The project is hosted by the Union of Young Communists, Federation of University Students, and other youth organizations in Cuba.

To find out more, contact:
youthexchange2003@yahoo.com

From Pathfinder Books for a working-class campaign against imperialism and war



Opening Guns of World War III

Washington's Assault on Iraq

In New International no.7

By Jack Barnes

The feature article in this issue of New International explains that the devastation of Iraq in the 1990-1991 Gulf War did not lead to the dawn of a new world order. The war held a mirror to the declining capitalist world order and accelerated its contradictions. It sounded the opening guns of sharpening conflicts and class battles that will decide whether the horrors of World War III are inflicted on humanity or a road is opened by working people to a socialist future of international human solidarity.

Other articles tell the hidden story of the GI revolt at the end of World War II, when U.S. troops refused to allow themselves to be used to crush spreading anticolonial struggles, and discusses the roots of the militarization drive Washington set in motion at the end of the 1970s. **\$12**

Special offer with a subscription to Militant: \$10

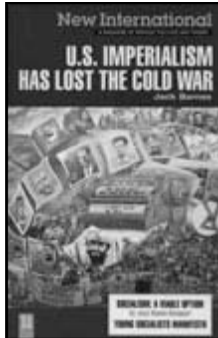
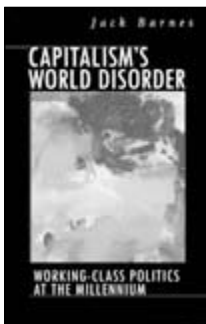
Capitalism's World Disorder

Working Class Politics at the Millenium

By Jack Barnes

Today's spreading economic and social crisis and acts of imperialist aggression are not the product of something gone wrong, Barnes explains, but the lawful workings of capitalism. Yet the future can be changed by the united struggle and selfless actions of workers and farmers conscious of their power to transform the world. Also available in French and Spanish. **\$23.95.**

Special offer with a subscription to Militant : \$15



U.S. Imperialism Has Lost the Cold War

In New International no.11

By Jack Barnes

Also includes

The Communist Strategy of Party Building Today

by Mary-Alice Waters

Socialism: A Viable Option

by José Ramón Balaguer

Young Socialist Manifesto

In English, French, and Spanish **\$14.00.**

Special offer with a subscription to Militant: \$10



Imperialism's March Towards Fascism and War

In New International no.10

By Jack Barnes

Also includes

Defending Cuba, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution

by Mary-Alice Waters

What the 1987 Stock Market Crash Foretold

In English, French, and Spanish **\$14.00.**

Special offer with a subscription to Militant: \$10

ORDER ONLINE AT WWW.PATHFINDERPRESS.COM

PLEASE INCLUDE \$3 FOR SHIPPING AND HANDLING. ALSO AVAILABLE FROM BOOKSTORES, INCLUDING THOSE LISTED ON PAGE 12

LETTERS

U.S. attacks journalists

The latest criticisms of Cuba which we see in the media focus on the accusation that there is no freedom for an independent press on the island. This charge ignores the fact that the Internet site for *Granma*, which originates in Cuba is one of the most used web pages on the net. However, most people in this country are unaware of the history of repression in the U.S. against independent journalists.

Eugene Debs was a journalist and a leading member of the Socialist Party in the US. Debs was sent to prison for three years because he gave a speech in Canton, Ohio, opposing U.S. participation in World War I.

Eighteen leading members of the Socialist Workers Party were sent to prison for having a position opposing the second world war. Several were writers for the *Militant* newspaper.

Ruben Salazar was a Chicano activist, a columnist for the *Los Angeles Times*, a news director for the Spanish language television station KMEX. About three months after four young women were murdered by National Guardsmen at Kent State University, there was a largely Chicano antiwar demonstration in Los Angeles. Salazar was shot and killed at point-blank range by a sheriff's deputy after this demonstration was broken up. The deputy was not found guilty of any wrongdoing.

Mumia Abu Jamal was the President of the Black Journalists Association in Philadelphia. Despite the overwhelming evidence supporting this argument, today Mumia Abu Jamal is serving a life sentence in prison.

Róger Calero is a writer for *Perspectiva Mundial* and the *Militant*. Today the INS is attempting to deport Calero because of a minor offense that he, and millions of other people living in this country have been found guilty of.

Before the media in this country

charge Cuba with intolerance of independent journalists, they need to take a good look at the history of a place called the United States of America.

Steve Halpern

Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Imperialist democracy

Listening to the capitalists use their weapons of mass distortion to debate how many troops it will take to screw in the light bulbs of Iraq, for how long, and by what methods: begs the question.

Who would benefit from bourgeois democracy in Central Asia. The imperialists have no trouble squeezing billions out without "freedom." The native bourgeoisie have millions to hide in the wall. No! It is the peasants, Bedouin, and workers who would benefit from the room to maneuver, be they Kurd, Sunni, or Shiite.

If anyone who thinks that imperialism would tolerate a workers and farmers government in Central Asia, willingly; they would have to forget the 10-year terrorist war against the workers and farmers of Nicaragua, and the 45-year campaign of terror against the Cuban people.

The answer to the media debate is that there will be no halt to the war against (to use the bosses' own words) "those uncivilized, uncultured people," who don't wear uniforms, but who stand up against U.S. Interests.

I don't know about other readers; be they Tyson strikers or New Zealand IP strikers, the description fits me.

Peter Glace

W. Springfield, Massachussets

Visit the web site

I visited your website for the first time. It seems to be really interesting. I'll come back!

A.K.

Leipzig, Germany

Tampa fund-raiser

Twenty four people crowded into the Pathfinder Bookstore in Tampa, Florida May 4 to hear James Harris, a leader of the Socialist Workers Party and garment worker in Atlanta, Georgia, speak on "Defending Cuba's Sovereignty, Defending Cuba's Socialist Revolution." The meeting, organized to respond to the increased provocations by the U.S. government against Cuba, drew people of all ages from throughout central Florida—from Daytona on the Atlantic coast to Tarpon Springs on the Gulf coast.

During the lively discussion, Alberto Jones described how his grandparents migrated from Jamaica to Cuba. "Those who came to work in the sugar plantations had a one way ticket." He spoke of the conditions of life that were forced on those in the rural areas and especially Blacks before the revolution. "How was it that Cuba was able to live through the 'Special Period?,' he posed. "Why didn't people rise up in rebellion? Because the Cuban people are willing to die hungry to defend the revolution. We do not want to wait another 400 years for our children to have the right to go to university."

Diego Negrao, a young Cuban who came to the U.S. when he was 5 years old, said that he had learned from his grandparents that "the Cuban revolution is something we need to defend." But he said he was bothered about some things in Cuba today. "Tourism and the use of the dollar is causing increasing inequalities. The families of those who came to the United States are receiving the dollars and getting rich. And there is discrimination against Blacks in the tourist areas."

Harris explained the importance of the internationalist missions that generations of Cubans have participated in. "They know more about the class struggle in Latin America

than they know about the class struggle in the United States," he said. "This is part of the importance of the Youth Exchange to Cuba and the tours by Cuban youth leaders to the United States."

Five students at the meeting are planning to be part of a Florida delegation to the Cuba-U.S. Youth Exchange in July. Audience members contributed \$873 to the Militant fund, and three people decided to subscribe to the socialist publication.

Rachele Fruit

Tampa, Florida

Farouk Abdel-Muhti

I just finished reading the letter to the editor from Farouk Abdel-Muhti in the May 5, 2003 issue of the *Militant*.

The brutal and inhumane treatment he is enduring at the hands of his jailers in the York, Pennsylvania prison is a complete outrage.

His letter solidarizing with the Cuban 5 is a testament of his spirit and courage. Please publish more about his case, and how to solidarize with his fight for justice. For example, where should letters protesting his prison conditions, and demanding his speedy release, be addressed?

I have recently participated in letter-writing campaigns on behalf of both Róger Calero and the Cuban 5. I am certain an appeal on behalf of Farouk Abdel-Muhti would meet with a similar outpouring of solidarity. All supporters of democratic rights and the Palestinian struggle should rally to his cause.

Marla Puziss

Atlanta, Georgia

Farouk Abdel-Muhti, an outspoken advocate of the Palestinian struggle for self-determination, was jailed without charges one year ago.

He is facing deportation from

the United States, where he has lived since the 1970s. Abdel-Muthi has been imprisoned indefinitely, first in several prisons in New Jersey, and more recently in a penitentiary in York, Pennsylvania. Abdel-Muthi is appealing for public support to press the government to release him and to drop deportation proceedings against him. Anyone interested can send a letter of protest to David J. Venturella, Assistant Deputy Executive Associate Commissioner, Office of Detention and Removal, tel. (212) 305-2734, fax (202) 353-9435, e-mail David.j.venturella@usdoj.gov. Please also call York County Jail warden Thomas Hogan at (717) 840-7580.

To write to Abdel-Muhti address correspondence as follows: Farouk Abdel-Muhti #75122, York County Jail, 3400 Concord Road, York, PA 17402-9580.

—Editor

Donate to the Militant Prisoners Fund

The fund makes it possible for workers and farmers behind bars to receive a subscription to the *Militant* at reduced rates: \$6 for a six month subscription and \$12 for one year.

Checks or money orders earmarked "Prisoners Fund" should be made out to the *Militant* and sent to 152 W. 36th St. Suite 401, New York, NY 10018.

The letters column is an open forum for all viewpoints on subjects of interest to working people.

Please keep your letters brief. Where necessary they will be abridged. Please indicate if you prefer that your initials be used rather than your full name.

1,200 Australian troops stay in Iraq

Canberra competes with Washington over wheat trade in the Middle East

BY RON POULSEN

SYDNEY, Australia—As U.S. forces imposed an occupation regime in Iraq, Australian imperialism has gone from invading force to occupying power. Under pressure from Washington and London, Canberra announced in mid-April that Australian forces would remain in Iraq indefinitely. After earlier official denials of any planned involvement in “peacekeeping,” and claims that the troops would come home, Prime Minister John Howard now says his government is making a “niche contribution” to the U.S. and British forces holding Iraq.

Around 1,200 Australian military personnel will remain in Iraq from an invasion force of 2,000. This commitment of resources by Canberra, a junior imperialist power, is one of its largest ever non-war military deployments.

The Australian forces that will remain in Iraq include a task force of 250 commandos, an engineering company, and troops with light armored vehicles for security and logistical support. Two C-130 Hercules transport planes and two P-3C Orion surveillance aircraft will stay too. A team of 50 military air traffic controllers and the frigate HMAS *Sydney* have also been dispatched. Fifteen civilian and military experts will join the US-led search for “weapons of mass destruction,” part of the original cover for the imperialist assault.

Howard said his government had an eye on the stability of the region, “but also to our own national interest in terms... of commercial interests.” Since World War II, Canberra has consistently gone to war alongside Washington, seeking to protect the profitable place of Australian big business in the world.

Now, despite being part of what U.S. president George Bush termed the “coalition of the willing,” in the war on Iraq, Canberra is scrambling to get a foothold in the trade rivalries that have become fiercer in the aftermath of the war.

An article by Peter Shabolt in the April 25 edition of *The Australian*, a national daily, was candidly titled “And Now for a Share in the Spoils of War.” The article said that because Canberra joined the US-led war, “Australian businesses... are better placed than ever to take advantage of the Iraqi carve up,” including the “gold rush” to rebuild Iraq’s bombed infrastructure.

The author admitted, however, that Australian corporations had “so far gained just one subcontract.” Despite trips to Washington by a procession of Australian government and business figures lobbying for a larger share of the loot, lucrative reconstruction contracts were being “stitched up,” he wrote, “by a select group of U.S. construction companies with White House connections.”

The article in the big-business paper pointed to “the real spoils of war” as being “a favorable outcome to the Free Trade Agreement [FTA]” currently being negotiated between Canberra and Washington. “With Iraq another notch on Australia’s rifle butt,” there is “breathless optimism” among Canberra’s pro-FTA politicians, according to Shabolt.

The author warned, however, that “the US does not have a long history of generosity when it comes to open agricultural markets.” Canberra also has a long list of protected agricultural and other markets, despite waving the “free trade” banner.

U.S. National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice, interviewed April 30 on the Australian Broadcasting Commission’s current affairs program *Lateline*, predicted “tough negotiations” over the FTA.

An Australian wheat shipment waiting off Iraq during the war became part of this competitive play for inside running on trade deals. It was diverted to Kuwait as the war ended for milling under the reactivated UN “oil-for-food program.” Australian officials were jubilant that



Australian naval forces escorting ships with “aid” into the port of Umm Qasr, Iraq.

their wheat beat out a U.S. “aid” shipment loaded with much fanfare in Texas, April 3, which arrived weeks later.

Iraq is Australian capitalism’s third largest trading partner in the Middle East, and part of its fastest growing regional export market there in everything from wheat to cars. The Iraqi wheat market alone has been worth almost a billion Australian dollars annually (U.S. \$630 million).

Now, despite marching in step to war, Canberra and Washington have growing trade frictions, especially over agricultural commodity markets.

US Wheat Associates, which lobbies for markets for the U.S. grain giants, has complained on its website about the Australian Wheat Board (AWB), a government-backed unified trading body. The U.S. group scored the AWB’s “wheat contract...

with Saddam’s regime,” adding that “folks at the AWB [have] mercantilism on their minds during this most dangerous time.”

Australia’s foreign minister Alexander Downer said in Washington at the end of March he hoped to ensure that Australian wheat sales to Iraq would not be undercut by subsidized U.S. wheat. After talks at the end of April with U.S. secretary for agriculture Ann Veneman, Australia’s trade minister Mark Vaile said the respective governments had agreed that their grain industries and traders would “operate and compete transparently in markets across the world without intervention or support.”

Shortly before Vaile’s trade mission arrived in the United States, Alan Tracy, head of US Wheat Associates, attacked the AWB over its hold on the Iraqi market. Referring to significant U.S. wheat exports to Iraq before the Gulf War of 1990–91, Tracy said “we hope to pick up where we left off.”

Speaking about these sharpening trade conflicts, Canberra’s industry minister Ian Macfarlane bluntly expressed the contradictions for Australian rulers in a recent TV interview. “When we went with the Americans into Vietnam... they stole our wheat markets,” he said. “They did exactly the same thing in the Middle East when we went into conflicts with them there.”

Ron Poulsen is a member of the Maritime Union of Australia.

New Zealand paperworkers keep pickets up at Kinleith to defend seniority, job safety

BY FELICITY COGGAN

TOKOROA, New Zealand—“This contract has taken nearly 50 years—a lot of sweat and hard labor has gone into it. The company wants to take terms and conditions off us that are very dear to us. It’s nothing to do with money, it’s about our rights, our health and safety.” This is what James Hastie, senior production delegate for 270 striking paper workers told a May Day rally in Auckland, New Zealand.

The workers, members of the Engineering, Printing and Manufacturing Union (EPMU) at the Kinleith pulp and paper mill in Tokoroa, walked off the job March 7 to protest a concession contract proposed by the company. With production stalled at the facility, the unionists are maintaining a round-the-clock camp at the mill entrance.

Key to the dispute are the company’s demands to scrap the current seniority provisions governing job assignments and promotion. Management is also seeking to replace the specialized fire-fighting unit by assigning other workers to these duties on top of doing their own jobs—a move that would seriously compromise safety standards.

“In our mill we have promotion lines—equal opportunities for everyone, whether Pacific Islander, Maori, pakeha [white] or woman, to work their way up,” Hastie told the rally. “They want the boss to have the sole right to appoint people.... Innocent people, people who speak up won’t get the opportunity. Because I speak out, I’m one of the first to be demoted under their system.”

The previous day, a bus load of Kinleith workers had traveled to Auckland to picket the company’s annual general meeting. The mill owner, Carter Holt Harvey, is the second largest company listed on the New Zealand stock exchange. On April 16, it reported a trebling in its first-quarter profit for this year. Carter Holt Harvey is half owned by the giant U.S.-based company International Paper.

Striking unionists have been busy visiting workplaces around the country and in Australia, as well as contacting sister unions in the United States, to win support. They have especially found a response from fellow timber workers and members of the EPMU,



Militant/Terry Coggan

Kinleith pulp and paper mill workers, in third month of strike, travel to Auckland to picket outside annual general meeting of mill owner, Carter Holt Harvey, May 3.

some of whom are giving regular financial contributions or visiting the protest camp.

Auckland-based Local 13 of the Maritime Union has donated several thousand dollars to the strike fund. Wharfies (longshoremen) organized by this union at the port of Auckland are collecting NZ \$20 per person to add to this (NZ\$1.00 = US\$0.56). A delegation of wharfies from the port of Tauranga visited the protest camp and organized a truckload of potatoes to be delivered there.

With the camp located on the main highway, just south of Tokoroa, truck drivers, other motorists and vacationers have been dropping in. One strike supporter at the camp described a driver that pulled up recently with two huge Easter eggs for the strikers’ children.

While a few women work at the mill, the work force is overwhelmingly male. Opal, who is married to one of the strikers, and a regular at the camp, explained how many strikers’ wives have become involved—attending the weekly strike meetings, and helping staff the campsite. A few days earlier, she explained, a group of women had set up their own picket at the entry gate to the mill for a while. She is now on her “third time round” she said, referring to two previous long strikes at the facility, in 1992 and 1980.

The company, which has been using the strike period to perform routine mill maintenance, is now foreshadowing laying off these 170 maintenance staff employed by a private contractor, and threatening to mothball the plant—a message they are also spelling out in the weekly personal letters they are sending to strikers’ homes. They are trying to “get at the wives, to get at the husbands,” Opal said.

The strikers have prepared their own leaflet explaining what their struggle is about and suggesting ways people can help. They have distributed it to letter boxes throughout Tokoroa. The unionists have held social events, including a family “fun day” and karaoke night at the camp site. One picketer, describing the response from townspeople, said that a busload of teenagers eating take-out food on their way home from a local disco saved their French fries to give to the “men at the strike.”

Donations or messages of support can be sent to the Kinleith Welfare Office, Currie Street, Tokoroa. For more information visit the strike website, www.kinleithworkers.com

Felicity Coggan is a sewing machine operator and a member of the National Distribution Union